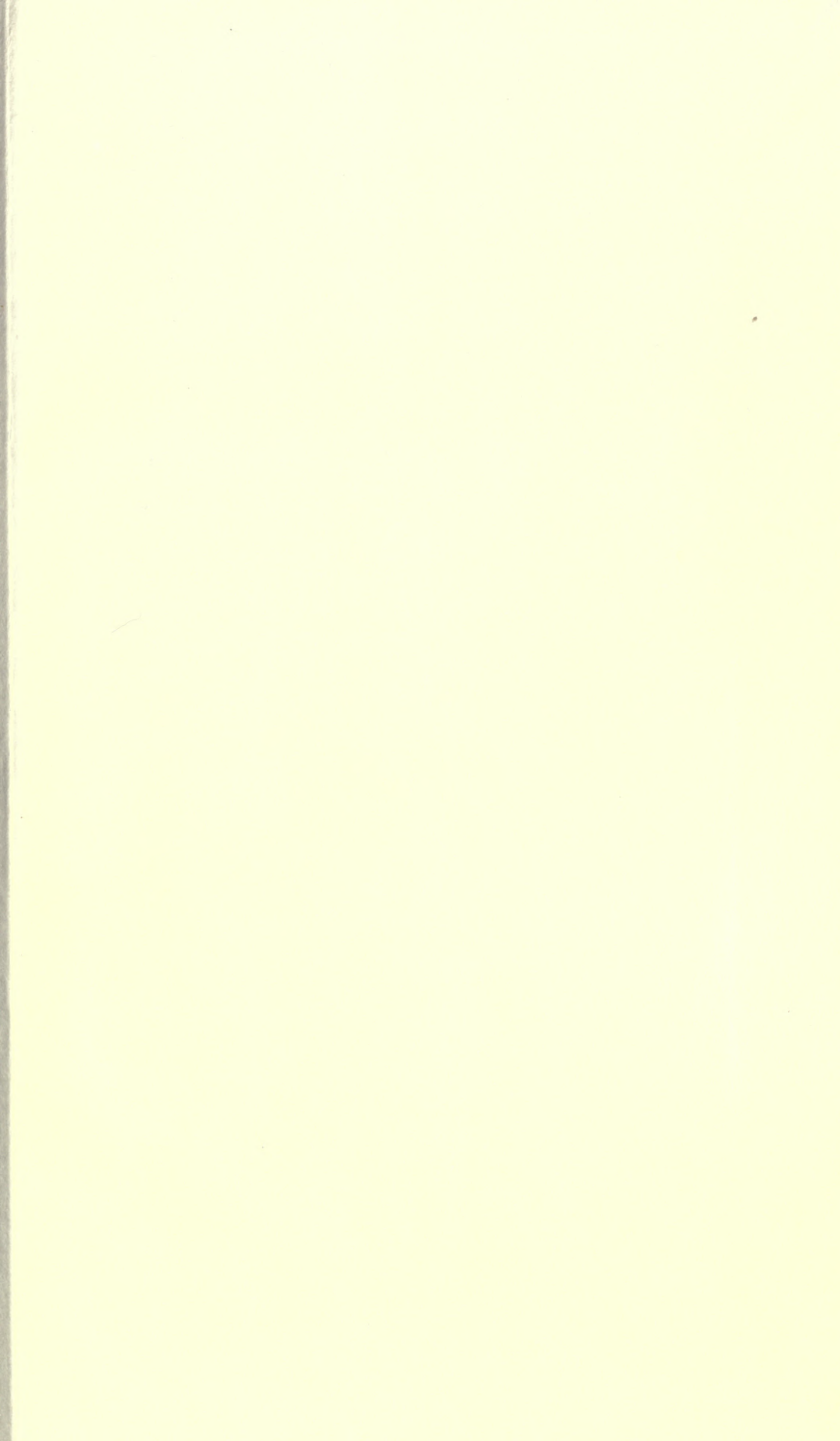




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OF  
THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.



HISTORY OF ENGLAND

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OF

THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

THE  
**HISTORY OF ENGLAND;**

DURING  
**THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.**

DESIGNED AS A CONTINUATION OF HUME AND SMOLLETT.

By **ROBERT SCOTT, Esq.**

AUTHOR OF THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES IN 'THE CABINET OF PORTRAITS,' &c.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND  
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THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.

BY FOUR VOLUMES.



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# HISTORY OF THE REIGN

OF

# GEORGE THE THIRD.

## CHAPTER XI.

**T**HE sensations excited by the American contest communicated to Ireland, and the spirit of opposition to the measures of government, which had so long prevailed in the city of London, extended in some measure to Dublin. In both capitals the party favourable to congress appeared on the increase, and the affairs of America becoming more unpromising, the perplexities of ministers, harassed by the unceasing efforts of opposition, were daily augmented. The first important discussion in Parliament, after the recess, arose from the following circumstance. The Earl of Harcourt, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, had sent a written message to the House of Commons, containing a requisition, in the King's name, of 4000 troops from thence for the American service, not to be paid by the Irish establishment during their absence, and, if desired by them, to be replaced by an equal number of foreign Protestant troops, the charges of which should be defrayed without any expense to Ireland. The Commons granted 4000 men, but rejected the offer of foreign troops, rather

wishing to embody the militia for their internal defence. This liberty of disposing of the public money without the knowledge of the British House of Commons, was considered by some as a stretch of power which ought not to be passed over in silence, and on the 15th of February, Mr. Thomas Townsend moved "that the Earl of Harcourt was herein chargeable with a breach of privilege, and had acted in derogation of the authority of the British House of Commons; and that a committee be appointed to inquire into the same." It was stated, on the other hand, that the measure was in exact conformity to that ancient and acknowledged prerogative, by which the crown, upon any emergency, raised troops of its own will, and then applied to Parliament for the payment, or entered into treaties for the same purpose with foreign princes, and pledged the national faith for a due performance of the articles. The motion for a committee to inquire into the matter of complaint was rejected by a majority of 224 to 106; and some other motions for laying the votes of the Irish Parliament, relative to this business, before the House, and for passing a censure on the lord-lieutenant's conduct, were negatived without a division.

The treaties entered into with the Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and the Count of Hanau, for hiring about 17,000 of their troops for the American service, were laid before Parliament by Lord North, who moved, on the 29th of February, to refer these compacts to the committee of supply, which occasioned a long and warm debate. The opposition contended that nothing could be more disgraceful to Great Britain, than to be obliged to apply to the petty princes of Germany for succours to enable her to subdue her own subjects, and insisted



on the danger of the measure, the expense attending the troops, and the little probability of their success. On the tendency of the example to induce the Americans to form alliances with foreign powers, it was strongly urged, that the colonists had hitherto ventured to commit themselves singly in this arduous contest, but it could not be doubted, that in future they would think themselves fully justified, both by our example and the laws of self-preservation, to engage foreigners to assist them in opposing those mercenaries, whom we were about to transport for their destruction. Nor was it doubtful that, in case of their application, European powers, of a rank far superior to that of those petty princes to whom we so abjectly sued for aid, would consider themselves to be equally entitled to interfere in the quarrel between us and our colonies. With regard to the expense in particular, it was said, that the German princes had set no bounds to their extortions: they were to have levy money at the rate of above 7*l.* a man; the troops were to enter into pay before they began to march; the princes had even the modesty to demand a double subsidy, which, in one instance, was to be continued for two years after the return of the troops to their respective countries. The ministry, in reply, entered fully into the defence of the measure, arguing that the terms were substantially the same as those of former treaties, by which Great Britain had obtained foreign troops for purposes of infinitely less national importance than the present; that the suddenness of the requisition, with the disagreeable circumstances attending this service, would have warranted higher demands: and that even supposing such a number of forces could have been speedily raised at home, it could not be expected that raw and undisciplined troops, who had

never seen any service, and who were not yet hardened to any change of food, climate, or habits of life, could answer the purpose so well as tried veterans, whose constitutional and military habits were already formed. The inconvenience and loss of withdrawing so many useful hands from husbandry and manufactures were also urged, adding, that the expense in that case would not end with the war, but that the nation would be saddled with the heavy and lasting incumbrance of the half-pay establishment of near thirty battalions: so that, in every point of view, those treaties would be found equally prudent and necessary. The debate continued till two o'clock next morning, when the question being put on the minister's motion, it was carried by a majority of 242 to 88. In the course of debate the general principle of letting out subjects on hire, to fight in the cause of foreigners, was severely censured. Lord Irnham observed, "I shall say little to the feelings of those princes who can sell their subjects for such purposes. We have read of the humourist Sancho's wish, that if he were a prince, all his subjects should be black-a-moors, as he could, by the sale of them, easily turn them into ready money; but that wish, however it may appear ridiculous, and unbecoming a sovereign, is much more innocent than a prince's availing himself of his vassals for the purpose of sacrificing them in such a destructive war, where he has the additional crime of making them destroy much better and nobler beings than themselves." The subject was again agitated on receiving the report from the committee of supply on the 4th of March; and with still greater vehemence next day in the House of Lords, where the Duke of Richmond moved for an address to his Majesty, which,



besides several observations relative to the treaties, took in a comprehensive view of the situation of American affairs, and the consequences of a perseverance in the present measures, all tending to give weight to a request, that his Majesty would be pleased to countermand the march of those foreign troops, and likewise give directions for an immediate suspension of hostilities in America, in order to lay a foundation for a happy and permanent reconciliation between the contending parts of the empire. The duke's motion being rejected by a majority of 100 to 32, the proposed address was entered on the journals in an unusual form, with the signatures of ten of the minority protesting against its rejection, but assigning no reason.

Among the various estimates and accounts which were referred to the committee of supply, the opposition directed their attacks particularly to that for defraying extraordinary expenses of the land forces, and other services incurred between the 9th of March, 1775, and the 31st of January, 1776, which amounted to 845,165*l*. Colonel Barré and Mr. Burke exerted all the powers of their eloquence, all the force of their wit and ridicule, in contrasting the most brilliant campaigns in English history with the exploits of the army at Boston: Marlborough's victories in the year 1704, and the conquest of Canada in 1760, were painted in glowing colours: Blenheim and the heights of Abraham were opposed to Lexington and Bunker's Hill; and the river Mystic was ludicrously placed in the same view with the Rhine and the Danube: the salvation of the German empire, the ruin of an ambitious power which had been for half a century the scourge and terror of Europe, the security and enlargement of the British dominions in North America,

had not, it was alleged, in any degree, equalled the expenses of the last campaign: both speakers concluded with high panegyrics on General Montgomery, the account of whose death had arrived a few days before. On the other hand, as a proof that the money had been properly applied, the requisitions of the commander in chief were produced, which were to be followed by proper vouchers for every article; and as to the little progress made in the first campaign, it was argued that the union of the colonies in forming the blockade of Boston, and preventing the supply which the abundance of that country yielded, could not have been expected; that it had occasioned delay in order to prepare for more vigorous measures, and had also rendered it necessary to send all the provisions for the British army from Europe, which was the immediate cause of those extraordinary expenses. In reply to the praises bestowed on General Montgomery, Lord North admitted them all, but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel; so that one might almost apply to him a passage in Cato—"Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country."—In the first division, the numbers were 180 against 57; and the House did not divide in any subsequent debate on the same subject. The whole supplies for the service of the current year amounted to very near 9,100,000*l.*: the ways and means resolved upon in the committee, consisting of the malt duty, the land tax, which, after a warm debate, had been raised from three to four shillings in the pound, exchequer bills, and the produce of the sinking fund, with some smaller resources, were calculated at little more than 7,150,000*l.*: in order to make up the deficiency a loan of 2,000,000*l.* was necessary, the interest of which was provided for



by a tax of twenty shillings each on gentlemen's four wheeled carriages, a tax of five pounds each on stage coaches, an additional stamp of one shilling on deeds, an additional halfpenny on newspapers, another six-penny stamp on cards, and a half crown stamp on dice: a vote of credit for 1,000,000*l.* was also passed, to enable his Majesty to defray any extraordinary expenses that might be incurred on account of military service, and to make good the charges of calling in the remainder of the light gold coin.

A motion, by Mr. Fox, for a committee to inquire into the causes of the ill success of his Majesty's arms in North America, and of the defection of the people of Quebec, was rejected by a majority of 240 against 104.

The last proposal of a conciliatory nature was introduced by the Duke of Grafton, who moved, on the 14th of March, for an address to his Majesty, beseeching him to issue a proclamation, declaring, that if the colonies, within a reasonable time before or after the arrival of the troops destined for America, should present a petition to the commander in chief, or to the commissioners under the act for preventing all trade and intercourse with the several colonies therein specified, setting forth what they consider to be their just rights and real grievances, his Majesty would consent to a suspension of arms; and that such petition should be received, considered, and answered. The duke argued, that the commissioners had only power to receive submissions, not to make concessions, and that the new doctrine of unconditional submission, which had been broached in the other House, would have the worst effects on the minds of the Americans. France and Spain, he said, were collecting great naval and military forces, and towards

the close of the last summer two French gentlemen went to America, and held a conference with General Washington at the provincial camp, who referred them to the continental congress, whither they immediately repaired. Little stress was laid by the lords in administration on either of those circumstances. They contended that the power of granting pardons was competent to every just and requisite purpose, and that the submission expected from the colonies was the only thing that could lay a lasting basis for the future security of the constitutional rights of that country, the supreme legislative controlling authority of this, and the general interests of the whole empire. With regard to the information of two gentlemen having visited Cambridge, the head quarters of the provincial army, and having afterwards gone to Philadelphia, they might either have been travellers on a tour of curiosity, or merchants who went to negotiate matters in the way of trade on their own private account. The duke's motion was rejected by a majority of 91 to 31. It would be easy, at the present period, to conjecture on the probable consequences of those schemes, had they been adopted. Their presumed success might be heightened by the ultimate failure of the measures which government pursued, and the accomplishment of the warnings then given to administration by the minority. Many of their prophecies were, indeed, fulfilled; the colonies persevered in their resistance; foreign powers took a part in their favour; and the mother country, after a long and expensive struggle, was obliged to relinquish her claims of sovereignty: but the avowals of the opposition may have had some tendency to produce those events which they predicted, and to

encourage the Americans to persevere in the contest; whilst their representations of the exhausted state of Great Britain may have operated as a temptation to her old enemies to join against her, though such a step was obviously repugnant to their real interest and sound policy. If France and Spain had not acted in opposition to this principle, it would certainly have been deemed more than unlikely that any hostile feeling should induce powers, possessing colonies of their own, to foment the spirit of revolt in those of another nation.

A bill for the establishment of a militia in Scotland had been brought in before the holidays, by Lord Mountstuart; but from the neglect of attendance which prevailed for some time, and from his lordship's desire of having the subject discussed in full Houses, it hung over during the greater part of the session. The grounds on which he defended the measure were very plausible. A militia, he said, was the great constitutional bulwark of the kingdom; and no good reason could be assigned for excluding any part of the island from contributing to the general security: yet the people of England were trained to the use of arms, while Scotland was left weak and defenceless: the retaining of such an invidious distinction served only to keep alive ancient jealousies, and to nourish odious prejudices and malignities. The greatest objection to the plan was, that five sixths of the expense must be paid by English land owners, as the militia were directly maintained out of the land tax, of which Scotland paid a very inconsiderable proportion. The advocates for the bill replied, that the land tax was no fair criterion of what Scotland really contributed towards the common support; for her consumption of English manufactures, and of



foreign commodities which paid duties here, was very considerable, and one half of the produce of the lands of that country was said to be expended in this. Though the opposition was aimed, throughout, at its entire rejection, frequent amendments were proposed, and new clauses offered, in every stage of its progress: the divisions ran very close; and, upon the day appointed for receiving the report from the committee after the second reading, March the 20th, it was thrown out by a majority of 112 to 95, the minister, who voted for the bill, being, on this occasion, left in a minority.

In the midst of so many concerns of the utmost national importance, no small part of the time and attention of the House of Lords was taken up by the trial of the Duchess of Kingston for bigamy. This lady, whose maiden name was Chudleigh, had in 1744 been privately married to a Mr. Hervey, then a lieutenant in the navy, but who afterwards succeeded to the title of Earl of Bristol. Her conduct not being calculated to secure the continuance of that affection which her personal charms had inspired, Mr. Hervey made proposals for a divorce; and she obtained a sentence declaring her free from all matrimonial engagements.

In 1769 she accepted the Duke of Kingston's hand; but on his death, in 1773, Lady Meadows, his sister and heir at law, filed a bill in chancery against her, when she pleaded the sentence of the ecclesiastical court, the validity of which was allowed by the lord chancellor, though another bill was soon after instituted, to prove that it had been obtained by collusion. A criminal prosecution was also commenced; and a bill of indictment for a second marriage, during the life of her first husband, having been found against

her, the matter was removed to the House of Lords. The settlement of the time, place, and forms to be observed at the trial, gave rise to a variety of debates, in which Lord Mansfield argued that the ecclesiastical sentence would be exhibited in her defence, and perhaps put a stop to the trial: but admitting that not to be the case, there was an express statute which would not permit peers to suffer corporal punishment for any thing under a capital crime: and he did not think that a trial, which, even on conviction, could not be productive of serious or important consequences, ought to be carried on with any particular and expensive solemnity. The majority concurred in sentiment, that the offence, though clergyable, being of the most atrocious nature, the trial ought to be conducted in the most public manner, and that it would be no small degree of punishment to the lady, if convicted, to be asked, whether she had ever before been admitted to her clergy, and on her answering in the negative, to be told that the just infliction of *burning in the hand* was now remitted on account of her rank, but that if she should ever again be guilty of a clergyable offence, she would be liable to suffer, as a common felon, the pains and penalties of death. After many delays, the order for the trial, which occupied several days, was finally fixed for the 15th of April. The most indisputable proofs appeared of the lady's guilt, and of the very improper means by which she had obtained the sentence of the ecclesiastical court to give a seeming sanction to her crimes; and, on being informed by the high steward, that the lords had pronounced her guilty, she claimed her privilege of peerage, which, after some opposition, was allowed.

This trial was the chief cause of suspending an inquiry to which Lord Effingham had called the

attention of the Upper House on the 27th of March. It related to an abuse of a clause in the prohibitory act, which enabled the admiralty to grant licenses to vessels for conveying stores and provisions to the forces upon the American service. Some artful adventurers, availing themselves of the loose terms in which those licenses were at first worded, had shipped off a quantity of prohibited goods for the American market, and a violent clamour was raised in the city on this occasion: it was represented as extremely grievous to the great body of American merchants, who were sinking under the encumbrance of goods which they had purchased for America, and for which they could find no other market. As almost every subject of either public or private complaint was now made a party affair, the whole blame was thrown upon the connivance of government; and the Earl of Effingham, a little before the recess at Easter, made a motion which was agreed to, that lists of such vessels, with their cargoes, as had been cleared out of the port of London for America, and of such licenses as had been granted, should be laid before the House. In the House of Commons Mr. Sawbridge, then lord mayor of London, moved, on the 2d of May, for a committee to inquire into the transaction, which Lord North did not oppose, though the abuses complained of were already corrected, and a stop put to the mischief. The 8th of May was appointed for a committee of the whole House to take the matter into consideration, when several witnesses were examined, and it appeared that the licenses complained of had been granted indiscriminately to all who applied for them, and as indiscriminately called in when it was discovered that an improper use had been made of them. Out of nine ships, for which the licenses had



been obtained, only three had sailed, and one of these was an hospital ship: the cargoes of the other six were re-landed; the quantity of goods fraudulently exported could not, therefore, be considerable. On the fullest investigation, after sitting on the inquiry till five o'clock in the morning, the House dismissed the matter as nugatory and ill-founded; nevertheless, just on the eve of the rising of Parliament, Lord Effingham revived it in the Upper House, by moving for the necessary papers, in order to prosecute the inquiry in the ensuing session, with which ministers complied, to prevent an opinion from prevailing without doors, that they had any wish to stifle inquiry.

The other business of this active session, was of no material importance. A great variety of proposals with regard to America received very slender support: Mr. Sawbridge made his annual motion respecting the duration of parliaments; and Wilkes, besides his usual attempt to reverse the decision on the Middlesex election, brought forward a plan of parliamentary reform, which were, of course, negatived. The public business being completed, the King went to the House of Lords, on the 23d of May, to give his assent to a few bills prepared for that purpose, and to close the session. Among the bills then presented to his Majesty were one to alter the mode of punishment of felons, sentenced to transportation, to hard labour in England, and a new insolvent act, the most remarkable condition in which was, that all future acquisitions of real property, or money in the funds, which should be made by any of the debtors who availed themselves of this act, were subjected to the claims of their several creditors: but, as they were to surrender all their present property, on oath, their persons, and such personal effects as they might

afterwards acquire, were to be for ever free from all demands on account of debts contracted before the 22d of the preceding January. After passing the bills, his Majesty said, that the assurances he had received of the disposition of the several powers in Europe, promised a continuance of the general tranquillity; he expressed concern and regret, at having found it necessary to ask extraordinary supplies, and said that we were engaged in a great national cause, the prosecution of which must inevitably be attended with difficulties and expense: but considering that the essential rights and interests of the whole empire are deeply concerned in the issue, and no safety or security could be found but in the constitutional subordination contended for, no price could be too high for the preservation of such objects. He still entertained hopes that his rebellious subjects might be awakened to a sense of their errors, and by a voluntary return to their duty, justify him in bringing about the favourite wish of his heart, the restoration of harmony and re-establishment of order and happiness in every part of his dominions.

The plan of the ensuing campaign in America was divided into three parts. The object of the first was the removal of the troops from Boston to New York, where they were to be joined by considerable reinforcements from England, to make a grand effort in the middle colonies; the second enterprise was directed to the southward, and the third expedition was to be undertaken in Canada. As the force destined for each of these purposes was deemed fully adequate to its execution, they were entered upon with the prospect of speedily terminating the war, though the event did not correspond with this expectation.

Washington and Lee joined the besieging army

before Boston soon after the battle of Bunker's Hill, but nothing of consequence was attempted during the remainder of the year; the garrison were, however, kept in a state of perpetual alarm, and suffered considerably, during so long a blockade, from hard duty, confinement, and scarcity of provisions, a great proportion of the supplies sent from England having been intercepted by American cruisers. In consequence of General Gage's departure for Europe, the chief command of the British forces devolved on General Howe, who thought he might continue in Boston till the spring, in perfect safety from any new endeavours of the enemy, but soon experienced a mortifying disappointment. General Washington, apprehensive that the garrison might be strengthened by fresh succours in the spring, and foreseeing that his own army would be wanted elsewhere to oppose impending dangers, began to prosecute the siege with redoubled vigour about the end of February, in hopes of becoming master of the place before the arrival of reinforcements from the mother country. The renewal of his attempts was very much forwarded by the capture of an ordnance ship from Woolwich, which unfortunately separated from her convoy, and being herself of no force, was taken without defence by a small privateer. This vessel contained, besides a large mortar upon a new construction, several pieces of fine brass cannon, a vast quantity of small arms and ammunition, with tools, utensils, and machines for camps and artillery in the greatest abundance, the whole being an invaluable acquisition to the besiegers. On the 2d of March a battery was opened at a place called Phipp's Farm, westward of the town, whence it was dreadfully annoyed by a furious discharge of cannon and bombs; and on the morning of the 5th, another was



opened from the heights of Dorchester Point on the opposite side, where two redoubts had been erected in the course of the preceding night. The situation of the army was now very critical; as the new works, along with others which it was evident would be speedily thrown up on some of the neighbouring hills, would command the town, a considerable part of the harbour, and of the beach, whence an embarkation must take place in case of a retreat, and render the communication between the troops on Boston Neck and the main body, both difficult and dangerous. In these circumstances no alternative remained but to evacuate the town, or to dislodge the provincials, and the latter design was immediately adopted: a violent storm, followed by a deluge of rain, delayed the perilous trial, in the first instance; and next day it was discovered, upon a nearer inspection, that more works had been constructed, still stronger than any of the former, and that the whole were now so completely fortified, that all hope of forcing them was at an end. It was in fact impossible to approach them; for in order to do so, the English must have ascended an almost perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogsheads, chained together in great numbers, and filled with stones, to roll down upon the assailants, which must have destroyed all order, broken their ranks, and swept away whole columns at once. Nothing, therefore, remained but to abandon the town, and to convey the troops, artillery, and stores, on board the ships that lay in the harbour. This measure required several days to carry it into execution, on account of the numbers to be removed, many of whom were sick and wounded; it was, however, effected on the 17th of March, when the garrison, with above 1500 of the inhabitants, who

were attached to the British cause, embarked for Halifax in Nova Scotia, to which they had a favourable passage. In the hurry of their departure they left behind them a large quantity of provisions, artillery, and stores: the barracks were uninjured; and the retreat from the capital of Massachusetts Bay was highly disadvantageous to the British arms. The fortifications at Castle William were, however, blown up, as they would have rendered all future attempts upon the town, by sea, impracticable: some ships of war were also stationed off the harbour, to warn and protect any vessels that should arrive from England; but they were too few to be perfectly successful; and several store-ships and transports, one of which was laden with 1500 barrels of powder, besides carbines, bayonets, travelling carriages for heavy cannon, and all sorts of tools, fell into the hands of the Americans, to whom these acquisitions were invaluable. As soon as General Washington perceived that the town was evacuated, he marched in with all the triumph of victory, and detached several regiments, under the command of General Lee, to the defence of New York, imagining that the British troops might have departed for that place; but the circumstances of the latter did not immediately admit of their undertaking any expedition.

During these transactions at Boston, Arnold remained posted with the remnant of his army on the heights of Abraham, about three miles from Quebec, whence he could intercept any supplies that might be attempted to be conveyed into the city, and where he hoped to increase his number by succours from the congress, and by ingratiating himself with the Canadians; but the succours were retarded by the almost insupportable hardships of a long march, in a rigorous sea-

son, and through a savage country ; and with regard to the Canadians, their affections were entirely alienated from the invaders, not only by their misfortunes, but their misbehaviour also. As the season approached, in which supplies and reinforcements for the garrison were sure to arrive from England, the Americans resolved to make a further effort before they should be obliged entirely to abandon the enterprise. They renewed the siege, raised some batteries, and made several attempts, by fire-ships and otherwise, to burn the vessels in the harbour. The project failed, though very boldly conducted ; and their troops were at one time drawn up, and scaling ladders, with every other preparation, were in readiness for storming the town, during the distraction which they hoped the fire-ships and batteries would have produced. They even penetrated into the suburbs, where they burned several houses, and compelled the garrison to pull down the rest, in order to prevent the flames from spreading ; but the judgment and vigilance of General Carleton baffled all their designs ; and the small pox, that scourge and terror of the western continent, broke out among them, making its usual ravages. The dread of the infection, which is considered as the American plague, and regarded with all the horror incident to that name, rendering it impossible to keep up any discipline, or to prevent the most alarming desertions, a retreat was resolved upon ; but even this could only be effected with the utmost precipitation and loss, on account of the sudden appearance of part of the English squadron, consisting of the *Isis* man of war, and two frigates, which had made their way through the ice, and arrived unexpectedly before Quebec. General Carleton lost no time in seizing the advantages which the present situation afforded ; a detachment



of soldiers and marines being landed from the shipping, and joined to the garrison, he marched out at their head, on the 6th of May. The Americans, having already begun a retreat, fled on all sides, on the appearance of the British troops, abandoning their artillery, military stores, and every other article of encumbrance. Some of the light-armed English ships having at the same time got up the river, captured several small vessels, and retook the Gaspee sloop of war, which had been seized in the beginning of the winter. Thus was the siege or blockade of Quebec raised, after a continuance of about five months; and from this time the Americans experienced nothing but defeats, till they were driven out of that province. The governor showed himself worthy of success, by an act which does great honour to his humanity. As a number of the sick and wounded provincials were concealed in the neighbouring woods and villages, where they were in the greatest danger of perishing under the complicated pressure of want, fear, and disease, he issued a proclamation, commanding the proper officers to find out these unhappy persons, and to afford them all necessary relief at the public expense; assuring them, that as soon as they were recovered, they should have free liberty to return to their respective provinces.

The remainder of the expected reinforcements, consisting of several regiments from Ireland, one from England, another from General Howe, together with the Brunswick troops, having successively arrived in Canada before the end of May, the most vigorous measures were immediately adopted, and, for the greater celerity of operation, the British general divided his forces into different detachments, appointing the general rendezvous at Trois Rivières, half way

between Quebec and Montreal, about ninety miles from each. Before any of the larger bodies were put in motion, an expedition was undertaken by Captain Forster, at the head of a small party of regulars and some Indians, against a place called the Cedars, about thirty miles to the westward of Montreal, on the river St. Lawrence. This fort, though naturally strong, and defended by 400 provincials, did not long resist Captain Forster's attack. A heavy fire of musketry having been continued for a few hours, the garrison surrendered on condition of having their lives preserved from the usual ferocity of the Indians. A detachment of the latter had also taken prisoners another party of provincials, who were marching from Montreal to the relief of the Cedars, and whose lives were spared through the interposition of Captain Forster. This brave officer advanced next day to Vaudreuil, about six miles north of the Cedars, whence Arnold, at the head of 700 men, made an attempt to dislodge him, but was obliged to return to St. Ann's, on the island of Montreal. Captain Forster not having yet received any intelligence of General Carleton's arrival at Trois Rivières, and finding himself much encumbered by the number of his prisoners, judged it expedient to release them in consequence of an agreement, signed by Arnold, to return an equal number of the King's troops of the same rank within the space of two months, and to send four captains to Quebec as hostages for the performance of the articles. This cartel was afterwards broken by congress, who alleged that Captain Forster had conducted himself towards the prisoners taken at the Cedars in a cruel and inhuman manner. That this dishonourable pretence to palliate a flagrant breach of faith was totally unfounded, is proved on the tes-



timony of Captain Sullivan, one of the hostages, who says that no man living could have used more humanity than Captain Forster did, after the surrender of the party to which he belonged.

In the mean time the British and Brunswick forces were advancing with all practicable dispatch. A considerable body, under Brigadier-general Frazer, had already taken their station at Trois Rivieres; another, under Brigadier-general Nesbit, lay near them on board some transports; and a third, more numerous than either, under Generals Carleton, Burgoyne, Philips, and the German commander Reidesel, were on the way from Quebec. At this juncture, the Americans, who had retreated as far as the river Sorrel, about fifty miles from Trois Rivieres, and had there been joined by some succours, formed a scheme for the surprise of the troops under General Frazer. Major-general Thompson, who conducted this enterprise, embarked at Sorrel with 2000 men, and coasting along the south side of what is called the Lake of St. Peter, arrived at Nicolet, whence they fell down the river by night, and passed to the other side, with the hope of being able to make a sudden attack before day-break; but General Frazer, having received intelligence of their approach, immediately prepared to receive them, and General Nesbit, at the same time, posted his detachment in their rear. After a furious, but ineffectual onset, their only resource was flight. Nesbit's corps kept the river side to prevent their escape to their boats, while Frazer's, in pursuit, galled them severely, and they were driven for some miles through a deep swamp, which they traversed with inconceivable toil, and in constant danger. The British troops at length grew tired of the pursuit, and the woods afforded the exhausted enemy



a wished-for shelter. About 200 men, with the first and second in command, were taken prisoners.

This was the last appearance of vigour shown by the provincials in Canada. General Carleton having arrived next day, June the 9th, at Trois Rivières, the whole army pushed forward, by land and water, with great expedition. When the fleet arrived at Sorrel, they found the enemy had abandoned that place a few hours before, having dismantled the batteries, and carried off their artillery and stores. A strong column was here landed under General Burgoyne, with orders to advance along the Sorrel to St. John's, while the remainder of the forces sailed up the river to Longueuil, where they discovered that the city and island of Montreal had been abandoned on the preceding evening. The army was immediately landed on the continent, and marching by La Prairie, crossed the peninsula formed by the St. Lawrence and the Sorrel, in order to join General Burgoyne at St. John's, where they expected a strong resistance; but that general, having pursued his march without intermission, and arrived at St. John's on the evening of the 18th, found the buildings in flames, and nearly every thing destroyed that could not be carried off. The provincials acted in the same manner at Chamblée, and burned such vessels as they were not able to drag up the rapids in their way to Lake Champlain, where they directly embarked for Crown Point.

The British commanders, having thus freed Canada from its invaders, were desirous of proceeding to the southward, and for this purpose determined to equip such a fleet as would enable them to traverse Lake Champlain with safety. This was a work of time and labour; but, by great exertion, in about three

months they acquired a naval force far superior to that of the Americans, thirty vessels, all carrying cannon, being constructed in that time, a few of the largest of which were first framed and sent over from Great Britain. It is remarkable that the two fleets were commanded by land officers, Carleton and Arnold being equally ambitious to support on a new element the reputation they had acquired by their military skill and conduct. Early on the 11th of October, the British armament, proceeding up the lake, discovered the enemy's fleet, drawn up with great judgment, in a line extending from the island of Valicourt to the western main, and a warm action ensued ; but the British ships of greatest force being prevented, by the unfavourableness of the wind, from advancing near enough to take a part in the engagement, Arnold availed himself of the darkness of night to get away undiscovered. Being eagerly pursued all the next day, he was overtaken on the 13th within a few leagues of Crown Point, and the action was renewed with great fury for two hours. Arnold had lost one of his largest ships and a gondola in the first engagement ; and though only two galleys and five gondolas remained, the rest having deserted him, and escaped to Ticonderoga, he made a most desperate resistance till, finding it impossible to withstand the force to which he was opposed, he ordered his vessels to be run on shore, in such a manner as to land their men in safety, and then to be blown up, remaining himself on board his galley till she was enveloped in flame, lest the British should strike his flag, which he kept flying to the last moment. Crown Point was immediately abandoned by the Americans, and all their force concentrated at Ticonderoga ; which being judged too strongly defended to be attacked at this

advanced season, General Carleton put his troops into winter cantonments in Canada, and General Burgoyne returned to England.

Whilst the rigours of winter alone retarded the progress of the British arms in the north, a total failure attended the expedition to the southward. It has been already mentioned, that Lord William Campbell and Mr. Martin, the governors of the two Carolinas, had found it necessary to take shelter on board the King's ships lying off the coast, not, however, without hopes of seeing their respective provinces soon reduced to obedience. They knew that a strong squadron of men of war, with a large body of land forces, was to be sent out early to the southern colonies, and that General Clinton, with a small detachment, had left Boston in December, to meet them at Cape Fear. Mr. Martin, in particular, omitted no scheme which the most active zeal and ingenuity could suggest for securing a number of adherents in the interior parts of the country, to co-operate with the British forces. He had, by means of emissaries, formed a junction between some Scotch emigrants, and a band of resolute unruly men called *Regulators*, who had long lived in a sort of savage independence, deriving their chief sustenance from the chase; but it being necessary to embody all the scattered parties of the loyalists in the month of January, as the only chance of keeping them steady in their intentions, and the force which was to countenance and support them not arriving in time, they were surrounded, before the end of February, by large parties of the provincial troops and militia; most of their leaders, and several of their bravest men, were killed or taken prisoners; and the rest were totally dispersed. The British squadron did not arrive for above two months



after, owing to a singular circumstance. The vessels had been sent round to Cork in the beginning of the winter, to take on board the troops and provisions; but the lord lieutenant of Ireland forming a very unseasonable scruple about the propriety of permitting the forces to embark without leave of the legislature, so much time was lost, that the fleet did not sail till the 12th of February. Sir Peter Parker went out as commodore, and the land forces were under the orders of Lord Cornwallis. After a tedious voyage, occasioned by the lateness of their departure, all the fleet, except a few ships, reached Cape Fear in North Carolina on the 3d of May. General Clinton, who was waiting for them with the utmost anxiety, immediately took the command of the troops, and issued a proclamation, inviting the inhabitants of the several colonies to return to their allegiance, and to place themselves under the protection of the British government; but the force and spirits of the loyalists were so entirely broken by their late misfortune, that no public avowal of their sentiments nor any farther efforts could be reasonably expected from them, unless they saw the royal standard erected in the heart of the country.

General Clinton's orders were to try if any of the southern provinces would take up arms in favour of Great Britain; in which case he was to have left a body of troops to assist the well-affected, and to proceed with the remainder of his forces to New York, to join General Howe. The late arrival of the fleet from Ireland precluded any slow experiments on the temper of the people; but General Clinton resolved to try the event of an attack on Charlestown, the capture of which would compensate for other disappointments. The whole fleet accordingly set sail

on the last day of May, and came to anchor off the bar on the 4th of June. They found the city in a strong posture of defence: works had been thrown up on Sullivan's Island, mounted with thirty pieces of cannon, in a situation commanding the channel of Charlestown harbour: the militia of the province were collected in great numbers for the defence of the metropolis: and Lee, who had carefully watched all Clinton's motions since his departure from Boston, was now encamped with a considerable body of forces on the continent, holding communication with Sullivan's Island by a bridge of boats. The British troops disembarked on Long Island, where they constructed two batteries of cannon and mortars to answer those of the enemy, and to co-operate with the floating batteries destined to cover their passage over a small creek that separated the two islands. The arrangements between the commanders by sea and land being completed, the *Thunder bomb*, covered by the *Friendship* armed ship, took her station on the morning of the 28th of June, and commenced the attack by throwing shells at the fort as the fleet advanced. About eleven o'clock, the *Bristol*, which was the commodore's ship, and the *Experiment*, both of fifty guns, with the *Active* and *Solebay* frigates, brought up directly against the fort, and began a furious cannonade, which was returned with equal fury and with more effect. The *Sphynx*, *Actæon*, and *Syren* frigates were ordered to take their station between the end of the island and Charlestown; but through the unskilfulness of the pilot, they were entangled in some shoals, where all three stuck; and though two of them were, after some time, with damage and difficulty got off, it was then too late, and they were besides in no condition

to execute the intended service; the *Actæon* could not be got off, and was burnt by her crew. The failure of this part of the plan in some measure decided the fate of the day; for between one and two o'clock, the fire from the fort slackened for want of ammunition, but was renewed on receiving a fresh supply from Lee's camp, and continued without intermission till night. The *Bristol* and *Experiment*, being most pointed at, appeared like wrecks upon the water; the springs of the former ship's cables being cut by the shot, she lay exposed in such a manner to the enemy's fire, as to be terribly raked. It is said that her quarter deck was at one time cleared of every person but the commodore, who stood alone, a spectacle of intrepidity and firmness, the others being all either killed, or carried down to have their wounds dressed. The heroic valour of Captain Morris corresponded well with that of his commodore. Although severely wounded, he disdained to quit his duty, until his arm being at length shot off, he was carried away without a hope of recovery. Above a hundred of the crew were killed or wounded: nor was the loss much less on board the *Experiment*. During this dreadful and obstinate conflict, the seamen anxiously expected to see the land forces advance from Long Island, but it had been found impracticable, the creek in the rear of the fort, though in general fordable, being at this time, through a long continuance of easterly winds, deep and dangerous. Sir Henry Clinton and several other officers waded up to their shoulders, and exerted every other effort of co-operation, but to very little purpose. The causes of the seeming inactivity of the army being at that time unknown to the brave combatants on board the fleet, they could not help feeling much disappointment, though it did



not slacken their astonishing exertions. At length Sir Peter Parker, perceiving that all possibility of success was at an end, withdrew his shattered vessels, between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, from an engagement which had been supported with extraordinary courage and vigour for above ten hours. On the 21st of July the army sailed for New York, under convoy of the *Solebay* frigate, the rest of the fleet being under the necessity of delaying a little longer to refit.

On the expedition against New York, far surpassing the others in magnitude and importance, the greatest expectation of success was founded. The islands, which constitute so large a part of the province, were exposed on all sides to the easy descent of troops, and to the direct attacks of a naval armament. The central situation of the province made it also a desirable inlet to the surrounding colonies. The war could be carried on with equal facility either in Connecticut and the continent of New York on the eastern side, or in New Jersey and from thence to Pennsylvania on the western, so as to leave it in the power of the British commander to prescribe the scene of action, and to quit it when he liked in perfect security. To crown these and other local advantages, Long Island, which is very fertile in all kinds of corn, and abounded with herds and flocks, was deemed almost equal in itself to the maintenance of an army. These circumstances would have probably tempted General Howe to make a descent on that island after he left Boston, instead of pursuing his voyage to Halifax, had his troops been fit for immediate action. After a long stay of above two months, growing impatient as the summer advanced, and being probably urged by the scarcity of provisions, he left Halifax the 11th of

June, and, on the 29th, reached Sandy Hook, near New York, where he was met by Major-general Tryon, the late governor, who gave him a full account of the state and disposition of the province, as well as of the strength of the enemy. Finding all the approachable parts of New York and Long Islands in a powerful state of defence, he proceeded to Staten Island, which being of less value and consequence was less attended to, and where he landed without opposition on the 3d of July. The succours from England, and the armament which was to co-operate with him, did not arrive for a week after. The naval force was under the command of his brother Lord Howe, who had also been appointed joint commissioner with the general, under the late act of Parliament, for restoring peace to America. It was thought that conciliating proposals would derive some increase of popularity from being conveyed through the medium of two officers, whose gallant brother had, in the former war, gloriously fallen at Ticonderoga, in defence of the colonies; but every day now diminished the chance of reconciliation.

On the 15th of May, the congress had taken an opportunity of feeling the general pulse of the people, and of preparing them for the declaration of independency which was to follow, by a kind of circular manifesto, to the several colonies, stating the causes which, in their opinion, rendered it necessary that all authority under the crown should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government taken respectively into their own hands. Pennsylvania and Maryland alone seemed averse to the proposal; the question being debated with great warmth in the provincial assembly of the former, and then referred to their constituents, by whom, however, it was de-

cided in favour of the recommendations of congress. In Maryland the delegates were instructed by a large majority of the assembly to oppose the declaration of independency, which they accordingly did, and having given their votes, withdrew. A body of the people soon obliged them to return, and the assembly were also compelled to ratify the important resolution. Every obstacle being thus surmounted, the congress, assuming a new title, and styling themselves the representatives of the *United States of America*, published on the 4th of July a solemn act, declaring those states to be *free and independent*; absolving them from all allegiance to the British crown; and renouncing all political connexion with the mother country. A supplement to the Declaration of Independency was published by the congress on the 4th of October following, under the title of Articles of Confederation and perpetual Union between the thirteen specified states, laying down an invariable system of rules or laws for their government in all public cases with respect to each other in peace or war, and also extending to their commerce with foreign nations. These articles received, as soon as the necessary forms would permit, the separate ratification of each colony.

Lord Howe was very much chagrined to find that this step had been taken before his arrival, as it threw a new and almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of any treaty. His lordship, however, resolved to make such efforts as yet remained, to bring about an accommodation. His first act was to send ashore, by a flag, on the 14th of July, a circular letter to the several late governors of the colonies, acquainting them with his civil and military powers, and desiring that they would publish, as generally as pos-



sible, for the information of the people, a declaration which accompanied the letter, wherein he fully explained the nature of his commission, and of the authority with which his brother and he were invested, under the late act of Parliament. The letter and declaration appeared in all the newspapers by the order of congress, with a preface or comment calculated to counteract the effect of both. Dr. Franklin, who had resided for some years in England as agent for the colonies of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, being now a leading member of the congress, Lord Howe addressed a letter to him also, touching upon the above mentioned points; expressing a hope and a wish to find in America the same disposition for peace that he brought with him; and concluding with requesting the doctor's aid to accomplish this desired end. The doctor, in reply, informed his lordship, that, preparatory to any propositions of amity or peace, it would be required that Great Britain should acknowledge the independence of America, defray the expenses of the war, and indemnify the colonies for burning their towns. This, however, he stated to be only his private opinion, and not authorized by those to whom the Americans had intrusted the power of peace or war. A correspondence was opened at the same time with General Washington, but to as little purpose. Lord Howe and his brother, unwilling to accede to such preliminaries as Dr. Franklin pointed out, and seeing, from the declaration of independence, and the vigorous preparations of the enemy, that nothing less would be accepted, resolved to commence hostilities without farther delay.

The troops under General Clinton from the southward, and some regiments from Florida and the

West Indies, having joined the grand army, which now amounted to near 30,000 men, the operations began on the 22d of August. A detachment of 4000 men was first embarked, and having landed without resistance on the south western extremity of Long Island, they were soon followed by the rest of the army and artillery. On the opposite side, near the village of Brooklyn, within view of New York, a large body of Americans, to the number of 15,000, were strongly posted, under the command of General Sullivan, assisted by General Putnam and some other able officers. His lines extended on the left to the East River, which separated him from New York; he was secured, on the right, by a marsh reaching to an inlet of the sea called Gowan's Cove; and he had Governor's Island and a bay to the rear of his encampment. Between the armies was a range of hills covered with wood, intersecting the country from east to west: through these hills were three passes; one to the westward, called the Narrows; a second nearly in the centre, taking its name from the village of Flatbush; and the third bending to the east towards the town of Bedford, on which side there was a road leading round the extremity of the hills to a plantation called Jamaica. These defiles were guarded by numerous parties; and the heights behind them were occupied by about two thirds of the whole body of forces, who had been detached from the camp to obstruct the progress of the British army. General Howe, having formed his plan, stationed General Grant at the head of the left wing to guard the coast, and to attempt a passage through the Narrows: General De Heister, with the Hessians, was ordered to the central post at Flatbush: and it being deemed practicable, from the report of



General Clinton and Sir William Erskine, who had reconnoitred the position of the enemy, to turn their left, the commander in chief resolved to make the attempt himself with the right wing, consisting of a strong advanced corps under General Clinton, supported by the brigades under Lord Percy. This division setting off about nine in the evening of the 26th, and crossing the country by Flatlands, made themselves masters of the eastern pass without any alarm being communicated to the Americans, having intercepted their patrol. At nine o'clock in the morning the British troops reached Bedford, and an attack was immediately begun on the enemy's left; they made but a feeble resistance, and retired from the woody grounds to their lines in evident confusion. As soon as the firing from this quarter was heard, General De Heister, with a column of Hessians, poured upon their centre, and forced them to take shelter in the woods, with the loss of three pieces of cannon. General Grant's column, which had driven the advanced guard of the enemy from a strong pass, began a very furious cannonade upon them early in the morning, in order to divert their attention from left, their wing and rear, where all the danger lay. They returned the fire with great spirit till they received news of the total rout of the rest of their army, when they fled in the utmost disorder: a few small parties took to the woods: but the greater number attempted to make their escape through the marsh at Gowan's Cove, where many were drowned, and some perished more miserably in the mud. Their loss, which was very considerable, would probably have been much greater, had the conquering troops been permitted, in the ardour of victory, to storm the American lines. Near 2000 of them were



killed or drowned; and about half that number, including three of their generals, Sullivan, Stirling, and Udell, with ten other field officers, were made prisoners. The British and Hessian troops had about 70 killed, and between 2 and 300 wounded. During the engagement General Washington passed over from New York, and effected a retreat in the night of the 29th with such silence, secrecy, and order, that the English army did not perceive the least motion, and were surprised in the morning at finding the lines abandoned, and seeing the last of the enemy's rear guard in their boats and out of danger. The only advantage which General Howe derived from his first day's victory, and his subsequent caution, was the inglorious acquisition of the deserted works of Brooklyn.

Soon after this event, General Sullivan was sent upon parole, with a verbal message from Lord Howe, to the congress at Philadelphia, importing, that though he could not at present treat with them in a legal character, he was desirous of conferring with some of the members as private gentlemen. He said, that he had, in conjunction with the general, full powers to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America on terms advantageous to both; the obtaining of which had detained him near two months, and prevented his arrival before the declaration of independency had taken place: that he wished a compact might be settled at this time, when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could say they were compelled to enter into the agreement: that if the congress were disposed to treat, many things which they had not yet asked might and ought to be granted to them: and that if, upon the conference, any probable ground of accom-

modation appeared, the authority of congress must of course be afterwards acknowledged, in order to render the compact complete. The congress returned for answer, that being the representatives of the free and independent states of America, they could not with propriety send any of their members to confer with his lordship in their private characters; but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they would send a committee to know whether he had any authority to treat with persons authorized by congress, and what that authority was, and to hear such propositions as he should think fit to make. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Rutledge being accordingly appointed, waited upon Lord Howe at Staten Island, who told them, that every act of Parliament which had been thought obnoxious to the colonies should undergo a revisal, and every just cause of complaint should be removed, if they would declare their willingness to submit to the British government. The committee replied, that an acknowledgment of the superiority of Great Britain could not now be expected; adding, that, even if the congress wished to replace America in her former situation, they had not the power to do so; for the declaration of independency had been made in consequence of the collected voice of the whole people, by whom alone it could be invalidated and abolished. Here the conference terminated, and the deputies, on their return to congress, reported that Lord Howe's commission appeared to contain no other authority of importance than was comprised in the act of Parliament. His lordship, on his part, published a declaration to the people of America, assuring them, that the parent state was ready to receive into its bosom and protection all who might

be willing to return to their former obedience; but this declaration had no great effect.

No hope remaining of accommodation, the English commanders resolved to act with vigour. The royal army, being divided only by the East river, about 1300 yards in breadth, from the island of New York, where the provincial forces had taken refuge, were impatient to pass that narrow boundary. After a long and severe cannonade from batteries which had been erected on some small islands between the opposite shores, and from several ships of war judiciously stationed to cover the disembarkation of the troops, a descent was made, on the 15th of September, at Kipp's Bay, within three miles of the town of New York. The army of General Washington being posted, part in the environs of the city, and part at Kingsbridge, on the isthmus which connects the peninsula with the continent, apprehensions were entertained that the English general, by landing a body of forces in the centre, would cut off the communication between them; on which a resolution was taken to evacuate the city; and on the actual landing of the British troops at Kipp's Bay, the Americans retreated with precipitation and some loss to Kingsbridge, where they had strong intrenchments. When the British forces had been six days in New York, an alarming fire broke out which consumed about 1000 houses, being nearly a third part of the town; and but for the great exertions of the sailors and troops, the whole city must have shared the same fate. After much time being spent in erecting a chain of redoubts to cover New York, some brigades of British and Hessian troops were left to defend it, and the rest of the army embarked on the 12th of October, in flat-bottomed boats, pro-



ceeding the same morning to land near West Chester, on the continent towards Connecticut, with a view to gain the rear of General Washington's encampment, and thereby force him either to hazard a battle, or suffer himself to be surrounded and confined in York Island. The American commander, alarmed by the remonstrances of General Lee, who had lately returned from South Carolina, perceived the necessity of making a grand movement to counteract this project, and immediately decamping with his whole army, took a new and strong position at White Plains, the deep river Brunx covering his front, and the North river flowing at some distance in the rear.

On the 28th of October the royal army advanced, in two columns, within cannon shot of the American lines, and a part of the left wing crossing the river, drove back, with loss, an advanced post of the American encampment, commanded by General Macdougal. Next day General Howe, observing the lines much strengthened by additional works, resolved to defer the assault till the arrival of some troops he had left on York Island, when he made new dispositions for storming the American intrenchment on the last day of October, which was prevented by incessant rains; and in the night of the 1st of November, Washington drew off his troops, and took a still stronger position amidst the woods and highlands bordering on the North Castle district. General Howe, perceiving that the nature of the country would not admit of forcing the American commander to an engagement, made a sudden movement towards Kingsbridge, and unexpectedly invested fort Washington, a strong post on the North river, opposite to which was fort Lee on the Jersey side. Colonel Magaw,

the commander of the fortress, refusing to surrender to General Howe's summons on the 15th of November, it was carried sword in hand by a furious assault the next morning. The loss of the royal army in killed and wounded amounted to about 800; that of the garrison to near 1200, besides more than 2000 who were made prisoners. On this acquisition, Lord Cornwallis was detached with a strong body of forces to form the investment of fort Lee, but found it already abandoned by the garrison, who retired with precipitation, leaving their artillery, provisions, and stores. General Washington, who had passed the North river to protect the province of Jersey, was compelled to retreat with a diminished force to Newark, whence he fell back, on the approach of Lord Cornwallis, to Brunswick, and thence, on the 1st of December, to Prince-town, having first broken down the bridge erected there over the Rariton. As the orders of his lordship were positive not to advance beyond Brunswick, he here sent dispatches to the commander in chief, expressing sanguine hopes, that by a continued pursuit he could entirely disperse the army under General Washington, and seize his heavy baggage and artillery before he could pass the Delaware, but General Howe only replied that he would join his lordship immediately; almost a week, however, elapsed before this junction took place. On the 7th of December the British army marched from Brunswick in the morning, and arrived in the afternoon at Prince-town, which place General Washington, with Stirling's brigade, had left scarcely an hour. Trenton on the Delaware, where the Americans were to embark for Pennsylvania, was but twelve miles distant, yet the British troops were detained for seventeen hours at Prince-town, and arrived at

Trenton just when the last boat of Washington's embarkation crossed the river.

During this retreat of the main army, General Lee, at the head of a considerable body of troops, had followed the track of Lord Cornwallis, but at too great a distance to be of any service to the commander in chief. It seemed as if his proud spirit would have been gratified by the total defeat of Washington, whom he would probably have succeeded, but a most mortifying event awaited him. On the 13th of December, while his army lay encamped in Morris County, intending to cross the Delaware to the northward of Trenton, he proceeded with a few attendants to the distance of two or three miles in order to reconnoitre, and stopped at a place called Baskingridge to breakfast. Colonel Harcourt, who had been sent out with a party of light horse to watch Lee's motions, receiving intelligence of his situation, instantly formed a plan for capturing this able officer, styled by the British army the *American Palladium*. Having made the proper dispositions to prevent Lee's escape, Harcourt galloped up to the house where the general was at breakfast, surprised the centinels placed to guard it, forced open the door, and made him a prisoner, as well as a French lieutenant-colonel who had accompanied him. The general was immediately mounted, and conveyed in safety to the British camp, though several guarded posts and armed patrols lay in the way. The making of a single officer prisoner would, in other circumstances, have been a matter of no very great moment; but, in the present state of the American forces, where a deficiency of military skill prevailed, the loss of a commander, whose spirit of enterprise was directed by great knowledge of his profession,



acquired in actual service, was of the utmost importance, particularly as there was little room to hope that it could be soon supplied. Washington, not having at this time any prisoner of equal rank with Lee, proposed to exchange six field officers for him; or if this was not accepted, he required that General Lee should be treated suitably to his station, until an opportunity offered for a direct and equal exchange. General Howe did not then think that Lee ought to be considered as a prisoner of war, but rather as a deserter from the service of Great Britain, though he had resigned his commission as a British officer on the commencement of the troubles; he was therefore closely confined; which afforded the Americans a pretext for treating several of their prisoners with an unusual degree of rigour.

While the royal army was overrunning the greater part of the Jerseys without opposition, General Clinton, with two brigades of British and two of Hessian troops, and a squadron of ships of war under the command of Sir Peter Parker, were sent to make an attempt upon Rhode Island. This enterprise succeeded even beyond expectation; for the Americans abandoned the island at their approach, and they took possession of it without the loss of a man, on the day that General Washington made his escape across the Delaware. In consequence also of their sudden arrival and success, an American squadron of five frigates, under Commodore Hopkins, was under the necessity of retiring up the river Providence, where it remained inactive. Notwithstanding these favourable circumstances attending the expedition, it has been censured as injudicious, the possession of Rhode Island having kept a great body of troops there unemployed for three years after.

The affairs of the colonies seemed now rapidly verging to a crisis. The army under General Washington, which, at the opening of the campaign, amounted to near 30,000 men, was reduced to a tenth part of that number, whole regiments, which had been enlisted only for a twelvemonth, having retired from the service, alleging that it was incumbent on their countrymen to bear an equal share in the support of the common cause. The panic, struck by the disasters at Long Island, New York, and the White Plains, with the progress of the royal army through the Jerseys, extended itself from the military to the civil departments of the new states. The governor, council, assembly, and magistracy of New Jersey, deserted that province. The congress fled with great precipitation to Baltimore, in Maryland; and some of the members sought pardon and security at the British head quarters. Repeated attempts were unsuccessfully made to raise the militia of Pennsylvania, and Washington contemplated a retreat to the recesses of the Allegany mountains, expecting to have been followed by the British forces, for though all the boats on the Delaware were, by a timely precaution, removed to the Pennsylvanian shore, the neighbourhood supplied materials which might have been converted into rafts and flotillas sufficient for the transportation of the troops; but General Howe determined to wait till they should be able to pass over on the ice, and in the mean time ordered them into cantonments, forming an extensive chain from Brunswick to the Delaware, and down the banks of that river for many miles, so as to compose a front at the end of the line looking over to Pennsylvania. Washington, on being fully informed of this disposition, exclaimed, in the spirit of a vigilant and sagacious commander, “ now

is the time to clip the wings of the enemy, while they are so spread."

Very early in the morning of the 26th of December, a day purposely selected on the supposition that the preceding festivity might favour the project of surprise, General Washington crossed the Delaware, not without extreme difficulty, as the river had begun to be frozen; and directly proceeding on his march in the midst of a storm of snow and hail, reached Trenton by day-break, where about 1600 men, chiefly Hessians, were stationed under the command of Colonel Rahl. Being thrown into confusion at the first attack, and the colonel mortally wounded, they abandoned their artillery, and attempted to make their retreat to Prince-town: but finding this impracticable, and being nearly surrounded, the three regiments of Rahl, Lossberg, and Knyphausen, laid down their arms and surrendered themselves prisoners of war; the remainder narrowly escaping by way of Bordentown. In the evening General Washington repassed the Delaware, carrying with him the prisoners, their artillery, and colours, and entered the city of Philadelphia in triumph. Nothing could have been more critically favourable to the republican cause, or more injurious to the reputation as well as to the future progress of the royal army, than this enterprise. The charm was now dissolved; and it being found by experience, that the Hessians in particular, who had been hitherto beheld with a sort of terror, were not invincible, great numbers again repaired to the American standard, and it soon appeared that this single stroke of success operated more powerfully on the great body of the people than all the other inducements held out to them to enlist, such as large bounties, the future acquisition of land-



ed property, and the promise of foreign assistance. General Washington soon found himself in a condition once more to cross the Delaware; and Lord Cornwallis, who was then at New York, on his way to England, was ordered to return to the defence of the Jerseys. His lordship, finding the troops in that quarter collected at Prince-town under General Grant, marched at their head, the second day of the new year, to attack the enemy, who were strongly posted at the back of Trenton Creek. After several skirmishes in the approach, a cannonade ensued on both sides, which continued till dark. Lord Cornwallis determined to renew the attempt next morning; but General Washington, who was far from intending to risk a battle, silently withdrew his army in the dead of the night, leaving fires burning in his camp and the usual patrols to keep up appearances, and by a circuitous march arrived just before sun-rise at Prince-town, where the fourth brigade of British troops were posted under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Mawhood, who had begun his march in order to join Lord Cornwallis, when he fell in with the vanguard of the American army. Though engaged with a far superior force, the brave Mawhood at the head of his own corps, with extraordinary gallantry fought his way through the thickest ranks of the enemy; the other regiments making separate retreats by different roads; they suffered, however, very severely in this unequal conflict, and were in a great measure disabled for future service.

As soon as Lord Cornwallis discovered Washington's manœuvre, being alarmed for the safety of the troops and magazines at Brunswick, he proceeded instantly to its defence. The Americans crossed the Millstone river without any farther attempt at that

time; but in a few days after, whilst Lord Cornwallis remained at Brunswick for the necessary refreshment of his harassed troops, Washington overran both East and West Jersey, spreading his army over the Rariton, and penetrating into Essex county, where he made himself master of the coast opposite to Staten Island, by seizing Newark, Elizabeth-town, and Woodbridge. He fixed his head quarters at Morris-town, a place situated amongst hills extremely difficult of access, with a fine country in his rear, whence he could draw supplies, and through which he could at any time secure an easy passage over the Delaware. Lord Cornwallis's troops were, on the contrary, very much straitened at Brunswick and Amboy, the only posts which they retained of all their late acquisitions in the Jerseys. Both places had fortunately an open communication by sea with New York, neither forage nor provisions being obtainable, in any part of the adjoining country, but at the point of the sword. The licentious ravages of the German soldiery, during the time they were in possession of the province, had excited the utmost resentment of the inhabitants; and on the fortune of war seeming to turn against them, the whole country rose in arms, many who had before been well affected to the royal cause, as well as the neutrals and the wavering, now becoming its determined enemies.

Though the great distance of the seat of war would certainly render its effects less interesting, it is difficult to account for the little emotion which American events excited in England. The hopes of those who approved of vigorous measures were kept alive, but not fully gratified, by the chequered occurrences of the campaign: they were therefore cautious of indulging, upon any show of temporary or partial

success, in a triumph which might be found premature. Their political adversaries had stronger reasons for being silent, and the usual bickerings of party were almost swallowed up in the uncertain issue of the remote contest. These remarks must, however, be considered as applicable only to the great body of society, zealots on both sides being equally violent in their approbation and their censure; those who were benefited by the war, magnifying every instance of success; whilst the losses it occasioned, and the ruin with which it was pregnant, were the constant themes of immediate sufferers. The planters in the West India islands and the merchants at home had experienced great distress since the commencement of the troubles, several of the necessaries of life, particularly the articles of sustenance used for the support of the negroes, as well as of the poor and laborious whites, having risen to four times their customary price, in consequence of the usual supplies being withheld. Staves, which in the next degree to food were an object of the greatest necessity, were not to be procured in a sufficient quantity at any price; but the dread of famine absorbed all lighter considerations. In addition to these calamities, a conspiracy of the negroes in Jamaica, though happily discovered in good time, and easily crushed in the bud, proved in its consequences extremely injurious. As the military force in Jamaica had been weakened by draughts for the American service, and the departure of a large fleet of merchantmen, with a part of the squadron on that station for their convoy, would render the island still more naked and defenceless, the negroes fixed upon that time for carrying their design into execution. The fleet, which was to have sailed in July, was detained,



on account of the discovery of the plot, a month longer; and this delay, besides being attended with expense to the owners, was productive of much greater misfortune. The Americans thereby gained time to equip their privateers; and bad weather separating the fleet, many merchant ships of considerable value fell into their hands. The loss sustained in the West India trade this year was estimated at more than 1,000,000*l.* sterling.

Strong symptoms of reviving enmity on the part of France and Spain appeared about this time, notwithstanding the most amicable professions. Their harbours in Europe began to swarm with American privateers, and English prizes were openly sold there; but after some remonstrances on this head, the public disposal of them was checked, though the practice still continued in secret. Considerable armaments were fitting out under the pretence of a dispute with Portugal, which might very probably be designed to co-operate with America, and it was judged necessary to be prepared for the event of a rupture. Accordingly, about the middle of October, sixteen additional ships of the line were put into commission; and the most effectual methods were taken for speedily manning them, by the offer of liberal bounties, and the more disagreeable expedient of pressing. Proclamations were also issued, commanding all British seamen, who were employed in any foreign service, to return to England; and laying an embargo on the exportation of provisions from Great Britain and Ireland.

Both Houses of Parliament met on the last day of October. They were assured, in the speech from the throne, that nothing could have afforded his Majesty so much satisfaction as to have been able to inform

them that the troubles in North America were at an end, and that the unhappy people there had returned to their duty ; but so daring and desperate was the spirit of their leaders, that they had openly renounced all allegiance to the crown, and all political connexion with the mother country ; they had rejected the means of conciliation held out to them ; they had presumed to set up their rebellious confederacies for independent states ; and if their treason were suffered to take root, much mischief must grow from it to the safety of the loyal colonies, to the commerce of Great Britain, and to the general system of Europe : one great advantage would, however, be derived from the open avowal of their intentions, and that was unanimity at home, founded in the general conviction of the justice and necessity of the measures to be pursued : the recovery of Canada, and the successes on the side of New York, afforded strong hopes of the most decisive good consequences ; but notwithstanding this fair prospect, it was necessary to prepare for another campaign : assurances of amity were still received from other courts, and it seemed likely that Europe would continue to enjoy the inestimable blessings of peace ; it was, however, expedient to be in a respectable state of defence. The speech proceeded to remark that no people ever enjoyed more happiness, or lived under a milder government, than those revolted provinces : that their improvements in every art declared it : and that their numbers, their wealth, their strength by sea and land, which they thought sufficient to enable them to make head against the whole power of the mother country, were irrefragable proofs of it.

Addresses in answer to this speech were moved in the usual form, and produced very long debates. An amendment was proposed by Lord John Cavendish

in the Lower, and the Marquis of Rockingham in the Upper House, describing at full length, and severely reprobating, what were termed the errors and misconduct of the ministry, which had occasioned the entire alienation, and at length the open revolt, of so large a part of his Majesty's once loyal and affectionate subjects. This amendment was rejected in the House of Commons by a majority of 242 against 87. In the House of Lords, the Marquis of Rockingham's motion was negatived by 91 to 26; but the proposed amendment was entered at full length in the journals, as a protest, and signed by 14 of the minority.

In a few days after the addresses were presented, there appeared, in the public prints, a copy of a declaration from Lord Howe and his brother, which had been issued in America soon after the taking of New York, addressed to the people at large of that continent, and acquainting them with his Majesty's having been graciously pleased to direct a revision of such of his royal instructions as might be construed to lay an improper restraint upon the freedom of legislation in any of his colonies, and to concur in the revisal of all acts by which his subjects there might think themselves aggrieved. This paper was brought before the House by Lord John Cavendish, who affected to consider it as a forgery: but its authenticity being acknowledged by the minister, his lordship expressed in the strongest terms his astonishment at both the contents of the declaration, and the extraordinary manner in which it came to the knowledge of Parliament, who in the whole conduct of the business had been treated merely as cyphers by the minister, and who were now at length informed, through the medium of a common newspaper only,



that they stood engaged to America to undertake a revision of those laws by which the Americans had conceived themselves to be aggrieved: notwithstanding the resentment he felt as a member of the House at this ministerial insolence of conduct, his lordship said, that a dawn of joy broke in upon his mind at the bare mention of reconciliation, and that if ministers were serious, he should not stand upon mere punctilios; in order, therefore, to give them all possible weight and assistance towards carrying such a design into effect, and to secure that necessary degree of confidence which the sanction of Parliament could alone give to any treaty that might now be set on foot, he moved, "that the House should resolve itself into a committee, to consider of the revisal of all acts of Parliament, by which his Majesty's subjects thought themselves aggrieved." Burke, Fox, and Dunning, were the principal speakers in support of the motion, which was made in a thin House, when no business of consequence was expected. Ministers, on the other hand, alleged that the paper in question was not of sufficient moment to be laid before Parliament, being no treaty, nor part of a treaty; but barely a preliminary, which might eventually lead to one. The motion for a committee was strenuously opposed, and after a long and violent debate was negatived by a majority of 109 against 47: from this time, a great number of the minority, chiefly of the Rockingham party, began to relax in their attendance upon Parliament, or rather to withdraw themselves wholly and avowedly upon all questions which related to America, and only to assist in the dispatch of private business. Their example, however, was not followed by several other members of the opposition, who thought that a partial secession was inconsistent with

their parliamentary duty, though they admitted that collectively it had not only the sanction of precedent, but might be practised with great advantage in cases of imminent danger to the constitution, and this disunion increased still further the strength of the ministry.

On the motion and grant of 45,000 seamen, in the committee of supply, Mr. Temple Luttrell animadverted severely on the conduct of Lord Sandwich, first lord of the admiralty, whom he charged with an imposition both on Parliament and the public, tending to lull the nation at this critical season into a fatal security, by a false account of the state of the navy, and moved that sundry returns should be laid before the House, which after much asperity of debate was rejected without a division. The naval supplies voted for the ensuing year amounted to 3,205,505*l.* exclusive of 4000*l.* towards the support and relief of worn-out seamen not provided for in Greenwich hospital, and 1,000,000*l.* granted at the close of the session for the discharge of the navy debt. The supplies for the land service fell little short of 3,000,000*l.* The extraordinaries for the last year, amounting to 1,200,000*l.* with some new contracts for German forces, and the expenses of half-pay and Chelsea, were not included in the gross sum. These necessary parts of the public business being dispatched, and the land and malt-tax bills having received the royal assent, both Houses adjourned on the 13th of December, which was appointed for a general fast, to the 21st of January following.

The only changes in any office of consequence, which occurred during the present year, were in the department for the education of the Prince of Wales and Bishop of Osnaburgh, and in the lord lieute-

nancy of Ireland. The former places had been vacated about the end of May, the Earl of Holderness, governor, the Bishop of Chester, preceptor, Mr. Smelt, sub-governor, and the Rev. Mr. Jackson, sub-preceptor, having all resigned their respective employments, owing, it was said, to some disagreement between the governor and preceptor. Lord Bruce was first induced to accept the governorship, with a promise of being created Earl of Aylesbury; but the office not suiting his temper or inclination, he gave it up in a few days, when his brother, the Duke of Montague, was appointed governor; Dr. Hurd, then Bishop of Litchfield, preceptor; Colonel Hotham, sub-governor; and the Rev. Mr. Arnold, sub-preceptor. Lord Bruce obtained his earldom, and was called to the privy council: and towards the close of the year, upon the death of Dr. Drummond, the Bishop of Chester was promoted to the archiepiscopal see of York. In Ireland a considerable promotion took place in the peerage about the beginning of July; and the Earl of Buckinghamshire was appointed lord lieutenant of that kingdom in the room of Lord Harcourt on the 22d of November.

We cannot omit, in the history of this eventful year, some account of an invention which attracted considerable notice. Mr. D. Hartley, member of Parliament for Kingston-upon-Hull, with whose plans for settling the disputes between the mother country and her colonies our readers are acquainted, devoted a considerable portion of his time and fortune to a discovery for checking the destructive violence of fire in dwelling-houses; and wishing to make it beneficial to himself as well as advantageous to mankind, he took great pains to retain the sole property in it, and, of course, the sole management of it, for some unusual



length of time. He built a house, three stories high, with two large rooms on a floor, on Wimbledon Common, and tried six experiments upon it, for the satisfaction of the public in general, and those great bodies in particular, including his Majesty, whose approbation was requisite for his obtaining an extension of the term to which royal patents are limited; and which was granted to him on the 3d of March, 1777. In the last of those exhibitions Mr. Hartley ordered a fire to be made on the deal flooring of one of the ground rooms. Then a large faggot of shavings, suspended by iron to the upper part of the same room, was set on fire. Thirdly, the staircase was set on fire both above and below, without the fire extending, in any instance, beyond the spot on which it was lighted. Lastly, the other room on the ground floor, filled almost to the top with faggots, pitch, and other combustibles, was set fire to; but though they all burned with such fury as to emit a perpetual torrent of flame and smoke, and thereby rendered all approach within thirty yards of the windows, on the outside, absolutely impracticable, the room adjoining to, and that immediately over, this little *Ætna*, continued as cool and as accessible as if no fire had been in the house. Mr. Hartley and some of his friends remained in these very rooms a great part of the time, during which the fire burned with the greatest violence in the other. Nor was it walls, and floors, and ceilings alone, which were thus enabled to mock the rage of the otherwise all devouring element: fixtures and even furniture were rendered proof against it; a bed, in particular, being purposely set on fire, had little more of it consumed than what the fire was immediately applied to. Astonishing as the effects of this contrivance must appear, the means perhaps may be thought equally

so. It is only nailing the thinnest plates of iron to the joints ; and those plates may be plain, or painted of any colour. "How," says the writer on whose testimony as an eye-witness the chief circumstances of this last experiment are related, "would such an happy event have rejoiced the good heart of the great Berkley, who, in his equally sensible, ingenious, and benevolent queries, looked upon our houses, considering their materials, as so many fire-ships ; and our towns and villages, as so many fleets and squadrons of such ships met together for the laudable purpose of mutual destruction !"

While one man was so successfully exerting all the powers of his mind and resources of his fortune in experiments to secure life and property from the dreadful ravages of fire, another was employed in horrid contrivances to destroy, as it were, in a general conflagration, the dock-yards and most flourishing cities in the kingdom. A fire which had broken out in the rope-house at Portsmouth, on the 7th of December, was then ascribed to accident ; but, about six weeks after, the discovery of a machine in the hemp-house, designed for the same purpose, led, eventually, to the conviction of James Aitken, commonly known by the appellation of John the painter, having been bred to that trade. He was born at Edinburgh, but being of a roving spirit, and strongly addicted to vice, had passed, in a few years, through a course of profligacy, and in 1773 rambled to America, where he continued about two years. Being of a melancholy solitary nature, little is known of his pursuits during that period, but he appears to have returned with a violent antipathy to the government and nation, and soon after formed a scheme for setting fire to the royal dock-yards, and burning the principal trading

cities and towns. In the autumn of 1776, he went to France, and communicated his intentions to Mr. Silas Deane, the American plenipotentiary to that court, who told him, according to his own story, that when the work was done, he should be rewarded. Whatever truth there may be in his having received this encouragement, he set about his project with the utmost eagerness; but his ignorance in the preparation of combustibles prevented the full execution of his plan, some of them, after being deposited and lighted, having failed in their effect. He, however, destroyed the rope-house at Portsmouth, and still pursuing his design, narrowly escaped being taken at Plymouth. His next attempt was to burn the shipping that lay alongside the quay at Bristol; but failing in this, he set fire to some warehouses in the vicinity, six or seven of which were consumed. Soon after his departure from Bristol, he was taken up in Hampshire for a burglary; and circumstances appearing to confirm the suspicion of his being at least an accomplice in the fire at Portsmouth, he was removed to London. On his examinations he refused to answer any question which admitted even of a doubt, in the remotest tendency, that the reply could be wrested to his crimination; yet, with all his caution, another painter, named Baldwin, who had also spent some time in America, found means to obtain his confidence in prison, and to draw from him the history of his crimes. He was convicted, chiefly on the evidence of this man, after a good defence, in which he dwelt on the acknowledged baseness of the witness; and received sentence of death with indifference. He was removed from Winchester gaol on the 10th of March, and executed on a gallows sixty feet high before Portsmouth dock-gate. Before he



was turned off, he sent for one of the officers belonging to the yard, to whom he acknowledged his crime, and also gave some cautions, with respect to the future preservation of the royal docks from similar dangers.

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## CHAPTER XII.

SOON after the Christmas recess, which expired on the 21st of January, 1777, a bill was passed, enabling the admiralty to authorize private merchantships to make prizes of all vessels belonging to the thirteen revolted colonies; and on the 6th of February Lord North moved for leave to bring in a bill to enable his Majesty to secure and detain persons charged with or suspected of the crime of high treason, committed in America or on the high seas, or the crime of piracy. He prefaced the motion by observing, that the law, as it stood at present, did not authorize government to apprehend the most suspected person; nor could the crown confine rebel prisoners or pirates in any other place than the common gaols: to remedy these inconveniences, and to empower his Majesty to confine such persons in the same manner as other prisoners of war, until criminal proceedings could be instituted against them, were, his lordship said, the purposes of his bill. It was brought in, and read on the ensuing day, and on the question being put for the second reading, Mr. Dunning, in order, as he alleged, to obtain time for the nation to consider whether they would surrender the foundation and corner-stone of all the rights which they possessed, moved to have the bill printed; in

which the minister could not well avoid acquiescing. In every subsequent stage of its progress, it was strongly opposed; no reason, it was said, existed for investing the crown with a power so dangerous, and of such extent, as to bring every subject of the British empire who frequented the seas within its perilous vortex; the minister disclaimed all design of extending the operation of the bill beyond its open and avowed objects, and readily agreed to some amendments, the object of one of which was to define the crime of piracy, by declaring that nothing should be deemed so but acts of felony committed on the ships or goods of the subject on the high seas: the other, which was of greater importance, was proposed by Mr. Dunning; and provided that nothing contained therein should be construed to extend to the case of any other prisoners, than such as have been out of the realm, at the time of the offence wherewith they should be charged or suspected. The bill was carried on the third reading, by 112 to 35.

Several accounts of the extraordinary unprovided services of the war having been laid before the committee of supply, it was moved, and carried without a division, that the sum of 970,000*l.* part of the million granted by the last vote of credit, and the farther sum of 1,200,000*l.* should be granted for the discharge of those services; but the manner of stating the accounts, and the charges in various articles of the expenditure, were strongly objected to. Lord North assured the House that great economy had been observed, and that the best possible terms had in every instance been obtained; he denied that any preference had been given to members of the House of Commons in contracts, which were always entered into with those who seemed the most able, and who were

the best calculated to fulfil their obligations ; but he, at the same time, maintained, that there was nothing in the situation of a gentleman's holding a seat in that House, which should exclude him from the advantages he might otherwise derive as a man of business, either from his engagements with the public, or with individuals. Among the items was one for 44,000*l.* charged as issued to a Colonel Fawcitt, which startled the committee for a moment ; till Lord North informed them, that the sum had been applied to satisfy a fair and reasonable, though unexpected demand, made by the Landgrave of Hesse for levy-money. But his lordship found it much more difficult, about two months after, to reconcile the House to another claim of above 40,000*l.* set up by the same prince, for the expenses of foreign hospitals in the last war. It was objected to the payment of this sum, that a commission had been appointed and carried into effect upon the late peace, for the sole purpose of examining, settling, and liquidating the German claims, which were found to be so shamefully exorbitant, that a discount of sixty or seventy per cent. was not unusual, even on those which seemed to be the best supported ; and that it would be highly disgraceful not only in administration, but in parliament, to submit in every instance to the insatiate rapacity of the German princes. On the other hand, the minister acknowledged the *staleness* of the claim ; but as the account was clearly and fairly established, he insisted that length of time did not weaken its justice or validity, and the resolution was carried by a majority of 38 to 20. On receiving the report next day the debate was renewed with great warmth ; and it was agreed to only by a majority of eight.



On the 9th of April, a few days before the discussion of this foreign claim, a message was delivered from the throne, in which much uneasiness was expressed by the King at being obliged to acquaint the House with the difficulties he laboured under, from debts incurred by the expenses of the household and of the civil government, which amounted, on the 5th of January, to upwards of 600,000*l*. The message was attended with a number of papers, containing various accounts of the expenditure, and a comparative statement of the whole amount of the civil list establishment from the year 1760, with that of the produce of the former revenues which had been appropriated to the like purpose during the same period; the former being intended to explain the causes of the excess in the expenditure, and the latter to show that the crown had been a loser by the bargain which it then made with Parliament. On the 16th of the same month, the day appointed for referring the message to the consideration of the committee of supply, Lord John Cavendish moved, that the order of reference be discharged, which, after a full debate, was rejected by a majority of 281 to 114; and the House, being then resolved into a committee of supply, passed two resolutions to the following purport; viz. "that the sum of 618,340*l*. should be granted to enable his Majesty to discharge the debts on the civil list; and that the sum of 100,000*l*. per annum over and above the sum of 800,000*l*. be granted, as a farther provision for the better support of his Majesty's household, and of the honour and dignity of the crown." A debate of some warmth ensued; but the motion was carried without difficulty, in both Houses. The Speaker of the House of Commons, on presenting the bill a few days after-

wards, for the royal assent, addressed his Majesty in the following terms :—" In a time, Sire, of public distress, full of difficulty and danger, their constituents labouring under burdens almost too heavy to be borne, your faithful Commons, postponing all other business, have not only granted to your Majesty a large present supply, but also a very great additional revenue, great beyond example, great beyond your Majesty's highest expense ; but all this, Sire, they have done in the well grounded confidence, that you will apply wisely what they have granted liberally." The King was little pleased with this unexpected liberty. On the return of the Speaker, the thanks of the House were immediately voted him ; but, in a subsequent debate, Mr. Rigby, the paymaster of the forces, arraigned his conduct, as conveying little less than an insult on the King, and as equally misrepresenting the sense of Parliament and the state of the nation. The Speaker appealed to the vote of thanks which had been passed, as a proof that he had not been guilty of the misrepresentation imputed to him ; and the minister expressed a wish that the subject might not be farther discussed. Mr. Fox declared, that a serious and direct charge having been brought, the question was now at issue. Either the Speaker had misrepresented the sense of the House, or he had not. He should, therefore, in order to bring this question to a proper and final decision, move, " that the Speaker of the House, in his speech to his Majesty at the bar of the House of Peers, did express, with just and proper energy, the sentiments of this House." The Speaker himself declared, that he would sit no longer in that chair than he was supported in the free exercise of his duty. He had discharged what he conceived to be

his duty, intending only to express the sense of the House; and from the vote of approbation with which he had been honoured, he had reason to believe he was not chargeable with any misrepresentation. Ministers, in pressing terms, now recommended the withdrawing of the motion; but this was positively refused, and Mr. Rigby moved an adjournment. As the House, however, appeared sensible of the degradation which its dignity must sustain from any affront offered to the chair, Mr. Rigby in some degree conceded, professing, that he meant no reflection upon the character of the Speaker, but that what he had said was the mere expression of his private opinion, and the result of that freedom of speech which was the right and privilege of every member of that House, without respect of persons; and that, if what he had advanced was not agreeable to the sense of the House, he would readily withdraw his motion of adjournment. Mr. Fox's motion was then unanimously carried, and the thanks of the House were voted to the Speaker for his conduct in this affair.

In addition to what has been already observed of the principal grants voted in the committee of supply, it may be proper to give a summary of Lord North's statements at the opening of the budget on the 14th of May. The sum total of the supplies which were deemed necessary for the public service was nearly 13,000,000*l.*: the ordinary revenue, or ways and means for raising these supplies, such as the land tax, the malt duty, the produce of the sinking fund, exchequer bills, &c. scarcely amounted to seven millions and a half, which left a deficiency of five millions and a half: the five millions were to be funded at an annuity of four per cent. and the remaining half million was to be raised by a lottery: the inte-



rest of the new loan, which, with a premium of one half per cent. for ten years, to encourage subscribers, amounted to 225,000*l.*, was to be paid by a tax of one guinea each on all male servants not employed in agriculture or trade; by a duty on auctioneers, and on goods sold by auction; by additional stamp duties; and by additional duties on glass. These taxes being considered to hit the due medium being mere luxuries and necessities, were agreed to without a division; and, a few days after, a vote of credit for another million, chargeable on the next aids, was passed, to enable his Majesty to defray any extra expenses that might be incurred on account of military service, and to make good the charges of calling in the deficient gold coin.

A most extraordinary transaction in the East Indies, which amounted to no less than the total subversion of established government in one of the principal settlements on the coast of Coromandel, together with several subsequent proceedings relative to it at the India House, brought the affairs of the company once more within the cognizance of Parliament. This revolution was generally ascribed to the intrigues and ambition of the Nabob of Arcot, who had risen to great power through the protection and alliance of the company, and had gradually acquired an overruling influence in the council at Madras. With a view, it was said, of more effectually promoting his designs, he laid by the jealous state and distant pride of an eastern despot, and seemed to become, as nearly as could possibly be admitted, an inmate and member of the British community at that settlement, making the outward, or *black town*, as it is called, the principal seat of his

residence. Thus he was in constant possession of every transaction that passed; and even of every proposal that originated in the council; nor is it improbable that some of the measures adopted there arose from his own immediate suggestions. It is certain that a joint enterprise, which was undertaken by the company's forces in that presidency with the nabob's, afforded too much colour to such an opinion, and deeply affected the character of the English nation both in Europe and Asia. This was the famous expedition to Tanjore, an enterprise heard of in almost every part of the world, and in all condemned for its cruelty and injustice. The rajah of Tanjore was one of those Gentoo princes whose ancestors had been long in possession of the country, and who had never been entirely subdued by the Mogul Tartars, but were rendered tributary to their empire, the government being otherwise retained in the original hands. This prince had been for many years in alliance both with the company and the nabob, and had been engaged with them in the perils and fortune of former wars. On the settlement of the affairs of the East Indies at the treaty of Paris, it was thought necessary to put an end to the dispute between France and England, who supported the interests of different pretenders to power in that part of the world: France was accordingly obliged to admit Salabat Jing as lawful Subah of the Deccan; and Mahomet Ali Cawn as lawful Nabob of the Carnatic. The mogul readily granted, on his part, such powers as were necessary to confirm these arrangements; accounts were liquidated, and a convention made under the authority and guarantee of the company between their own allies. The nabob was to be paid the arrears of, and to receive in future,

the tribute due to the mogul, for which he was to be accountable to their common superior, and to have a considerable sum for himself. The rajah was to remain in all other respects as before in possession of his dominions; but a variety of transactions soon after took place between him and the nabob, and new accounts were opened, the rajah alleging that he ought to be allowed for his expenses in certain military services rendered to the nabob, and the latter insisting on receiving immediate payment of the sums stipulated under the late convention without any abatement. These disputes continued for some time, till the nabob prevailed on the powers at Madras, and on the royal commissioners, to fall in with his views; and a war, on the pretence of a delay in payment, broke out. The rajah being little able to withstand the united force of the company and nabob, his capital was taken after a brave defence, and the unhappy prince was stripped, without pity or remorse, of every thing but life. His kingdom was seized by the nabob; his treasures were applied to the expenses of the war, and to other present purposes; whilst his subjects, who were among the most industrious people in India, experienced all the cruelty and rapacity of a Mahometan conquest and government. The account of this transaction, with all the circumstances of the spoil and ruin of a friend and ally in so unexampled a manner, excited the greatest indignation of the company in England, who were much alarmed at the visible ascendancy over the councils and actions of their servants, of which the nabob had now given a very dangerous proof. He had also removed his eldest son, a mild and moderate prince, from all power, and from the command of his armies, and



placed it in the hands of his second son, a young man of a temper more congenial to his own; good policy, therefore, as well as justice, pointed out the propriety of setting some bounds to the nabob's ambitious career, by restoring the rajah to his dominions. The company, at the same time, were far from wishing to fall out with the nabob, if it could be avoided; nor were they disposed to urge matters to an extremity with their servants, a reparation of the outrage and wrong being likely to answer every purpose, whilst a vigorous prosecution of the delinquents would in all probability involve the company's affairs in perplexity. In order to execute so delicate a commission with equal prudence, safety, and honour, it was resolved to send out Lord Pigot as governor and president of Madras, the company very reasonably supposing, that his appearance upon that ground which had been the scene of his former power and glory, where his name and actions were still fresh and alive, and where the principal and most dangerous party was little more than the creature of his own making, would have been attended with distinguished advantages; and that he might have performed those acts without envy or jealousy, which would have been opposed or resented in other hands. The time that unavoidably elapsed before Lord Pigot's arrival in his government, afforded a full scope for the exercise of the nabob's ability in intrigue; and though the part already taken by the council would necessarily influence their conduct in endeavouring to support or confirm their own former act, he thought it prudent to interest them still more deeply in the measure of securing to him the perpetual possession of Tanjore. He accordingly borrowed vast sums of money from several members of the council, and

some others whose weight and concurrence might be requisite for the completion of his scheme ; and directly or indirectly mortgaged to them the revenues of Tanjore, as a security both for the principal, and for a prodigious interest arising on it, which amounted annually to near one third of the original debt. Lord Pigot reached Madras the latter end of the year 1775, and succeeded so far as to restore the rajah to the just possession of his dominions ; but he had now to encounter the mortal enmity of the nabob, and a corrupt combination of the majority of the council, who were farther strengthened by the dangerous power lodged in the hands of the commander in chief of the forces. The disputes grew hotter from day to day, and the cabals with the nabob grew closer and closer. It was of the greatest moment to send a proper officer to Tanjore, and the opposition part of the council agreed with the governor on the measure, and the designation of the person ; but they soon changed their minds about the latter, and insisted that, being the majority of the council, they had a right to do every thing regardless of the governor's opinion or dissent. Lord Pigot, finding them actuated by no other principle than that of traversing all his endeavours for carrying the orders of the company into execution, took a very bold step, for which nothing but the exigency of the moment could afford any excuse ; and having put the question, carried the suspension of two of the council by his own casting vote. He also put Sir Robert Fletcher, the commander in chief of the forces, under an arrest for disobedience of his supreme authority in the fortress. Instead of waiting the decision of the company on these measures, a plot was formed by the offended party for seizing the

person of the president, and for effecting a complete revolution in their own favour. In consequence of the arrest laid upon Sir Robert Fletcher, Colonel Stuart succeeded to the command of the forces; but though he was in the highest state of intimacy and friendship with Lord Pigot, he entered deeply into the views of the conspirators; and as any military violence offered to the governor within the precincts of the fortress would involve the actors in the penalties of the mutiny laws, the colonel drew him from the only situation which could afford him security. On the 23d of August, 1776, he took occasion, from the excessive heat of the weather, to recommend a cool retreat to a villa at a small distance from Madras, appropriated to the use of the governors, making an offer of his own company as a farther inducement; and on the way they were surrounded, as had been concerted, by an officer and party of seapoys, both in the company's service, when, under the auspices and immediate hands of his late companion and guest, the governor was thrust out of his chaise, and carried prisoner to a place called the Mount, where he was confined under a strong military guard. His enemies now seized all the powers of government, appointing their principal leader to be his successor, and copying the very act on which their chief complaints against him were founded, by removing from the council such members as had voted with him in the former struggle. Both parties sent confidential persons to England, the one to arraign, and the other to justify, the late proceedings; and even the nabob had an agent in London, who left no means untried to secure effectual support both at the India House and in Parliament. When the whole business, however, was formally laid before the proprietors at their quarterly



court, on the 26th of March, 1777, they agreed to a resolution, which was afterwards confirmed on a ballot by a majority of 382 to 140, recommending to the court of directors, "to take the most effectual measures for restoring Lord Pigot to the full exercise of the powers vested in him by the company, and for inquiring into the conduct of the principal actors in his imprisonment." At a court of directors, held on the 11th of April, several resolutions were passed, conformable to this determination. Lord Pigot and his four friends, who had been driven from their seats, were reinstated; and the seven members of the council, including the commander in chief, who had violently overthrown the government by a military force, were suspended from the company's service: but to these was added a vote of censure on Lord Pigot's conduct, as in several instances reprehensible, and whilst instructions were preparing to accompany the resolutions, a division amongst the directors caused considerable delay and embarrassment. At length, under the imposing show of an attempt to please all parties, to reconcile all differences, and to administer impartial justice, three new resolutions were proposed; and, to the astonishment of the public, the question in favour of them was carried, at another general court of the proprietors on the 9th of May, by a majority of 414 to 317. By the first of these resolutions, after reprobating the treatment which Lord Pigot had met with, and affording him the mockery of a temporary restoration to his government, without any power of acting in it, he was ordered immediately home, for an inquiry into his conduct: by the second, his friends in the council were ordered home: and by the third, the whole body of his enemies were likewise recalled. These

proceedings at the India House prompted Governor Johnstone to bring the matter before Parliament on the 22d of the same month, and to move several resolutions which strongly approved of Lord Pigot's conduct, and on which he intended to found a bill for better securing the English settlements in the East Indies. The motion was opposed by the friends of administration, though most of the principals were absent, perhaps from an unwillingness to take any share in the debate; but the speakers of the minority particularly exerted themselves, and Mr. Fox excited such bursts of applause as had seldom been heard in a British House of Commons. On a division, however, the numbers were only 67, in favour of Governor Johnstone's motion, against 90, by whom it was rejected. The unfortunate nobleman, who was the chief subject of the debate, did not live to feel the additional sting of parliamentary injustice, having expired in confinement eleven days before this decision. The affair was again brought before the House of Commons, on the 16th of April, 1779, when Admiral Pigot, the deceased lord's brother, moved an address to his Majesty, praying, "that he would be graciously pleased to give directions to his attorney-general to prosecute George Stratton, Henry Brooke, Charles Floyer, and George Mackay, Esqrs. for ordering their governor, Lord Pigot, to be arrested and confined under a military force; they being returned to England, and now within the jurisdiction of his Majesty's courts of Westminster Hall." Stratton, the ringleader of those conspirators, was then in his place, as a member of the House of Commons, and entered into a long defence of his own conduct, as well as that of his colleagues; but his vindication appeared so unsatisfactory, that Admiral Pigot's reso-



lutions were carried and the address agreed to unanimously. In the sequel, however, the delinquents, though convicted in the court of King's Bench, were sentenced only to pay a trifling fine.

The attention of Parliament was called from the confusions of the east to the more pressing concerns of the western world. On the 30th of May, the Lords having been summoned for the purpose, a motion was made by the Earl of Chatham, "that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, advising him to take the most speedy and effectual measures for putting a stop to the present unnatural war against the colonies, upon the only just and solid foundation, namely, the removal of accumulated grievances." His lordship, though bowed down by age and infirmity, and bearing a crutch in each hand, exerted himself with all the fire of youth. "By the removal of accumulated grievances," said he, "I mean the repeal of every oppressive act which has been passed since the year 1763. This will open the way for treaty: it will be the harbinger of peace to the afflicted colonies; and will convince them, that Parliament is sincerely disposed to reconciliation. We have tried for unconditional submission: let us now try what may be gained by unconditional redress. The door of mercy has been hitherto shut against them: you have ransacked every corner of Germany for boors and ruffians to invade and ravage their country; for to conquer it, my lords, is impossible—You cannot do it. I may as well pretend to drive them before me with this crutch. I am experienced in spring hopes and vernal promises; but at last will come your equinoctial disappointment. Besides, my lords, could those hopes be even realized, and should you conquer America, you conquer under the cannon of



France, under a masked battery then ready to open. The pretensions of France will increase daily, so as to become an avowed party in either peace or war. The latter is not the less probable because professions of amity continue to be made. It would be folly in France to declare it now, while America gives full employment to our arms, and is pouring into her lap her wealth and produce. While the trade of Great Britain languishes, while her taxes increase and her revenues diminish, France is securing and drawing to herself that commerce which is the basis of your power."—The motion, though well supported by the Duke of Grafton, by Lord Camden, and the Earl of Shelburne, was opposed by a very considerable majority, as it held out nothing new, and was only a repetition of what had been often proposed, and as often rejected in that House: oppressive acts or particular grievances were no longer the subject of dispute; the great question now at issue was the supremacy of Great Britain and the subordinate dependence of America. The lords in administration denied any danger from France, and asserted, that the assistance given to the Americans proceeded neither from the court nor the cabinet, but from the spirit of military enterprise and commercial adventure. The motion was rejected by 99 voices against 28.

A grant of 3000*l.* was voted to the British Museum in the course of the session, and, at its close on the 6th of June, the Speaker, on presenting the bills to the King, again addressed him, stating the hope of the House that speedy means would be found to stop the ravages of war, which would otherwise be attended with consequences ruinous to the prosperity, perhaps dangerous to the safety of the country. The

King, in his speech, expressed his entire approbation of the conduct of Parliament, and thanked them for the unquestionable proofs they had given of their clear discernment of the true interests of their country.

During the recess no occurrence took place at home worth recording, but almost every day brought intelligence of the progress of the campaign in America. It began early in the spring with small enterprises, which were conducted with great spirit, and were considered as preludes to more enlarged plans of operation. A detachment of 500 men, under Colonel Bird, was sent on the 23d of March about fifty miles from New York, up the North River, to Peek's Kill, which served as a kind of port to a mountainous tract, called the manor of Courland, where the Americans, during the winter, had erected mills, and established their principal magazines. The enemy, though superior in number, retired to a strong pass about two miles distant, first setting fire to the barracks and store-houses, and the British troops, after destroying several small craft laden with provisions, returned to New York.

Sir William Howe having obtained intelligence that the Americans had deposited large quantities of stores and provisions in the town of Danbury, and other places in the borders of Connecticut, which lay contiguous to Courland Manor, it was resolved to undertake another expedition against those parts; and the conduct of it was intrusted to Governor Tryon, who had been lately promoted to the rank of major-general of the loyalists, as a reward for his activity in raising and disciplining considerable bodies of them. He was accompanied by Brigadier-general Agnew and Sir William Erskine. Two thousand men were landed on the 25th of April about twenty

miles to the southward of Danbury, at ten o'clock at night, and reached their destination at day-break, the enemy being unprepared to oppose them: but they soon perceived that the country was rising to intercept their return; and as they were unable to bring off the stores and provisions, they proceeded without delay to the destruction of the magazine. The town was also reduced to ashes. A day having been spent in the execution of this service, the American generals Wooster, Arnold, and Silliman, hastily collecting such militia as were within their reach, exerted every effort to cut off the retreat of the detachment. In one of these skirmishes, Wooster was mortally wounded; and though Arnold, by crossing the country, had gained an advantageous post at Ridgefield, and had thrown up some intrenchments to cover his front, he found the British troops irresistible: the village was forced; the Americans were driven back on every side; and their commander, who displayed much personal valour, had a very narrow escape. It being then late in the evening, General Tryon and his men rested on their arms that night; but at day-break, the enemy, having been reinforced with troops and cannon, assailed them from all quarters, and skirmishes were continued till the royal forces gained the hill of Compo, within half a mile of the shipping, where they formed immediately upon the high ground. Sir William Erskine, placing himself at the head of 400 of the most able of the detachment, charged the enemy with the bayonet, and so completely routed them, that the British troops were suffered to re-embark without any farther annoyance. Large quantities of corn, flour, and salt provisions, about 2000 tents, with various military stores and necessaries, were destroyed in the course of this expedition. The



British troops did not sustain so considerable a loss as might have been expected during this harassing march; the killed, wounded, and missing, amounting to 172. That sustained by their opponents was much greater.

The Americans were in some measure revenged for these losses by the result of a visit to Long Island. Having received intelligence that commissaries had, for some time, been employed in procuring forage, grain, and other necessities for the British forces, and that these articles were deposited at a little port called Saggy Harbour, Colonel Meigs, an active officer, who had attended Arnold to Quebec, and had been taken prisoner in the attempt to storm that city, crossed the sound on the 23d of May with a detachment of about 150 men in whale-boats; he first landed on the north branch of the island, and, after carrying the boats over an arm of land, embarked again, and landed on the south branch, within four miles of Saggy Harbour. They arrived at this place before day-break, and succeeded in burning a dozen brigs and sloops that lay at the wharf, and destroying every thing that was deposited on the shore. They also brought off with them about ninety prisoners, including the officer on duty, with his men, and the crews of the small vessels which they had destroyed. If the American account of this expedition be correct, it was accomplished with remarkable celerity, the party having, within twenty-five hours, not only fully accomplished the object of their enterprise, but traversed, by land and water, a space of 90 miles.

The troops under Lord Cornwallis at Brunswick and Amboy suffered considerable hardship, during the winter, from the severity of the weather, the difficulty of obtaining provisions and forage, and the

unremitting duty occasioned by the nearness of the enemy, and by the frequent attempts made on both sides to surprise each other's outposts. Though the Americans were defeated in almost every encounter, yet these skirmishes gradually inured them to military service. About the latter end of May, congress were enabled to send large supplies of men from the different provinces to General Washington, who, on receiving this reinforcement, quitted his former camp at Morris-town, and advancing within a few miles of Brunswick, took possession of the strong country along Middle-brook, which was secured by every means both of natural and artificial defence, and commanded at the same time a full view of all the motions of his adversaries. The army at New York was not able to take the field till June, for want of tent and field equipage, which at length arriving from England, with a body of Anspach troops and some British and German recruits, Sir William Howe, with a force very greatly superior to that of Washington, which only amounted to 7272 men, passed over to the Jerseys, resolved to try all possible means of inducing his opponent to quit his fastnesses, and to hazard an engagement; but the American commander penetrated into his designs, and eluded them by his cool, collected, and prudent conduct. Finding every other manœuvre ineffectual, Sir William, after having continued four days in front of the enemy's lines, retreated on the 19th of June, with marks of seeming precipitation. He ordered the whole army to fall back from Brunswick to Amboy, a movement which had all the immediate effect that could have been expected, and several large bodies under the command of the generals Maxwell, Conway, and Lord Stirling, rushed on to harass the rear.



Another measure adopted by the British general at Amboy served to complete the delusion: he threw a bridge over the channel that separates Staten Island from the continent; and a part of the troops having crossed with the heavy baggage, the rest of the army seemed just ready to follow; so that every thing concurred to make the Americans believe that the retreat was real. Even Washington, with all his caution, was so far imposed upon by this feint, that he left his almost inaccessible posts upon the hills, and advanced to a place called Quibble-town, to be the nearer at hand for the protection or support of his advanced parties. The British general lost no time in endeavouring to profit by these circumstances, and marched the army back by different routes with the utmost expedition, in hopes of cutting off some of those parties that had been most eager in the pursuit, and of coming up with the main body at Quibble-town; or, if these schemes failed through the celerity of the enemy, Lord Cornwallis, with his column, was to take a considerable circuit to the right, and strive to get possession of some passes in the mountains, which, by their situation and command of ground, would have reduced Washington to the necessity of abandoning his strong hold. In the prosecution of this part of the plan, his lordship fell in with a large detachment of the enemy, consisting of about 3000 men, under the command of Lord Stirling and General Maxwell, strongly posted, and well provided with artillery, whom he put to the rout, and pursued as far as Westfield, where the woods and the intense heat of the day put a stop to his career; the Americans lost 200 men and three pieces of brass cannon. General Washington soon perceived his error, and as speedily remedied it, by regaining his station on the



hills, and securing those passes which were the grand object of Lord Cornwallis's enterprise. Sir William Howe, being now convinced that any new scheme of bringing the Americans to an engagement would be not only fruitless, but a waste of that time and season which might be better employed elsewhere, resolved to convey his army by sea into the heart of Pennsylvania. On the 28th of June, he returned with all the forces to Amboy, and next day crossed over to Staten Island, whence the embarkation was intended to take place.

During the cessation produced by preparations on the one side, and a general alarm on the other from the impossibility of knowing where the storm would fall, a spirited adventure was undertaken by an American colonel of the name of Barton, which had for its object the carrying off General Prescott, who commanded at Rhode Island, and thereby not only retaliating the surprise of General Lee, but also procuring an indemnification for his person. The British general's head quarters were on the west side of the island, about a quarter of a mile from the shore. He was guarded by only one centinel at a time; and as there was not any body of troops within a mile of him, nor any patrols along the shore, he must have depended solely on a guard-ship that lay in the bay, opposite to his quarters. Colonel Barton, being acquainted with these circumstances, set out from Providence, with some officers and soldiers, in two boats, keeping close to the island, till he came to the south end, where he remained till dark, and then proceeded across the bay, and landed near the general's quarters about midnight. The centinel was surprised; the general was taken out of bed; and, without being suffered to put on his clothes,

was hurried on board one of the boats. The boat passed under the stern of the British guard-ship without being perceived, and conveyed the general in safety to Providence. He was much blamed for his imprudence, in trusting himself so far from the troops under his command, and not adopting proper means of security. He had also been weak enough to provoke some such attempt by offering a reward for taking Arnold, as if he had been a common outlaw; a silly insult, which Arnold immediately returned, by setting an inferior price upon Prescott's person. Sir William Howe had hitherto steadily refused to release General Lee on any conditions whatever; but the capture of General Prescott obliged him to give up that point, and Lee was in a short time restored to the American cause.

On the 23d of July, the army, leaving a sufficient force under General Clinton for the defence of New York, and seven battalions at Rhode Island, sailed with the fleet from Sandy Hook; and after being pent up in transports till the 25th of August, in the hottest season of the year, landed at Elk Ferry, at the head of Chesapeak Bay. Washington, whose force had been augmented to 14,000, and who had been for some weeks in anxious suspense as to the destination of the troops, upon this intelligence took possession of the heights on the eastern side of the river Brandywine, which falls into the Delaware below Philadelphia, with an intention to dispute the passage. By day-break on the 11th of September, the British army advanced in two columns, the right commanded by General Knyphausen, marching directly to Chadsford; and the other column, under Lord Cornwallis, taking a circuit to the left in order to cross the *forks* of the Brandywine, and attack the

enemy on the right flank. The first, after a severe conflict, succeeded in forcing the passage of the ford, and the latter routed the right wing, commanded by General Sullivan. The approach of night, and Sir William Howe's usual tardiness, or rather neglect to push his advantages next morning, prevented the total destruction of the American army. About 300 of them were killed in the action, 600 wounded, and near 400 taken prisoners: they also lost several pieces of artillery. Of the British 100 were killed, and 400 wounded. Had an early and vigorous pursuit been ordered next day, it was confidently asserted, that the small and confused parties of the enemy must have been cut off, and that even Washington and the corps he kept together, with whom he remained for the whole night at Chester, only eight miles from the field of battle, would have been intercepted in their retreat to Philadelphia, as it was twenty-three miles distant from them, though no more than eighteen from the British camp; but, on the other hand, it must be admitted, that the army, having been so long confined in transports, was not in a condition to make a very rapid advance. The Marquis de la Fayette, then only nineteen years of age, who had recently entered into the American service, was wounded in this engagement.

Intelligence having been received on the 20th of September, that General Wayne had concealed himself in the woods, with 1500 men, for the purpose of harassing the British army on their march, Major-general Grey was detached at night, with two regiments and a body of light infantry, to surprise that corps. His skill and energy were very conspicuous in this enterprise. He gave strict orders that not a gun should be fired, and that his men should trust



solely to the silent effect of the bayonet. The enemy's outposts were completely surprised, at one in the morning; and a dreadful slaughter took place, about 300 being killed or wounded, and 100 taken, the remainder escaping by the darkness of the night, with the loss of their baggage and stores. Only four were killed on the side of the victors, and the same number wounded. Three days after, the whole army passed the Schuylkill without opposition, and advanced on the 26th to German-town, a village about seven miles from the capital of the province, where the main body formed an encampment. Next morning Lord Cornwallis, at the head of a strong detachment, took peaceable possession of Philadelphia, the congress having removed their sittings to York-town in Virginia, and General Washington having also withdrawn to Skippach Creek, a strong post about sixteen miles from the British head quarters.

As soon as Lord Howe received intelligence of these successes, he moved round with the fleet from the Chesapeak to the Delaware, the navigation of which the Americans had endeavoured to render impracticable by works and batteries constructed on a low, marshy island, formed near the junction of the Delaware and the Schuylkill; and on the opposite shore, by a redoubt and intrenchment at a place called Redbank. Across the mid-channel they had in various parts sunk large transverse beams, bolted together, and strongly headed with iron pikes pointing in various directions, to which, from the resemblance of form, the appellation was given of *chevaux-de-frize*. Dr. Franklin is said to have assisted in the contrivance of the whole machinery, before his departure for France. To remove these obstructions, so as to open a communication between the fleet and

the army, was an object of the utmost importance; but it could not be accomplished without previously reducing the forts, by which they were defended. Some strong parties were therefore employed on this service: three regiments had been left at Chester, for the purpose of securing the conveyance of stores and provisions; and the detachment under Lord Cornwallis at Philadelphia consisted of four battalions of grenadiers and a squadron of light horse. General Washington, hearing of this dispersion of the British forces, and having been lately strengthened by the arrival of 1500 troops from Peck's Kill, and 1000 Virginians, formed the design of surprising the camp at German-town. With this view he left Skippach Creek at six in the evening of the 3d of October, and marching all night, began his attack at day-break. The 40th regiment, which lay at the head of the village, being overpowered by numbers, was under the necessity of retreating; but their brave commander, Lieutenant-colonel Musgrave, contrived to keep five companies together, and took post with them in a large stone house, which lay full in the front of the enemy. This gallant conduct arrested the Americans in their career, and in the event prevented the separation of the right and left wings, while it afforded time to the whole line to get under arms. The colonel and his party, though surrounded by a brigade, who at length brought up four pieces of cannon to the assault, maintained their post with undaunted courage, pouring a dreadful and incessant fire through the windows, till they were relieved by Major-general Grey and three battalions of the left wing, who were vigorously supported by Brigadier-general Agnew at the head of the fourth brigade. The engagement for some time was very warm,



when a part of the right wing pouring down upon the enemy from the opposite side of the village, they made good their retreat, with all their artillery, under cover of a thick fog. The loss of the Americans in this action was supposed to amount to between 2 and 300 killed, 600 wounded, and above 400 prisoners. General Nash and several inferior officers were among the slain. The British troops also suffered severely. About 70 were killed, including Brigadier-general Agnew and Lieutenant-colonel Bird, officers of distinguished reputation. A few only were taken prisoners; but the wounded amounted to near 450.

Measures being soon after concerted between Sir William Howe and his brother for removing the obstructions of the river, the British army withdrew from German-town to the vicinity of Philadelphia, and a strong body of Hessians was sent over Cowper's Ferry on the 22d of October to storm the fortress of Red-bank, whilst the ships and batteries on the other side were to carry on their attacks against Mud Island, and against several armed vessels stationed there. Though the best dispositions were made for these attacks, the enterprise was in every respect unfortunate; the Hessians, after a desperate engagement, were repulsed with prodigious slaughter; and the men of war and frigates, though they made their way through the lower barrier, could not bring their fire to bear, with effect, either on the principal works, or on the enemy's marine. The *Augusta* man of war and *Merlin* sloop were stranded in avoiding the *chevaux-de-frize*, and the former was by accident blown up. On the 15th of November, the attack was renewed with a more formidable force; and the artillery of the enemy being completely silenced towards evening, the garrison retired



in the night across the river in boats to Red-bank, which was also soon after evacuated. The *chevaux-de-frize* were now weighed with much difficulty, and the free navigation of the Delaware was restored; but as winter was fast advancing, no farther military or naval enterprises of moment were attempted in that quarter during the remainder of the season, for which Sir William Howe has been thought censurable.

Washington had taken post at a place called Valley Forge, about 26 miles distant, where his soldiers, destitute of tents and winter clothing, built huts in the woods, to shelter themselves from the inclemency of the weather; a dreadful mortality raged in his hospitals; and the supplies of provisions were scanty and precarious: his numbers were also reduced by desertion, so that in three months he had not 4000 effective men. He continued in this state from December to May, during which time Sir William Howe, with 14,000 well-appointed troops, lay quiet at Philadelphia, where a want of proper discipline pervaded his army; and whilst hunger and disease thinned the Americans at Valley Forge, indolence and luxury weakened the British forces at Philadelphia.

The war on the side of Canada and the Lakes was also an object of the utmost importance, and was intrusted to General Burgoyne, who, after concerting with the ministry the plan of the intended expedition, returned to America early in the spring of 1777, as commander in chief of the northern army beyond the limits of Canada, an appointment which occasioned Sir Guy Carleton to resign his government in disgust. This meritorious and esteemed officer had acted, throughout the former campaign, with equal vigour, judgment, and success; from his long residence in Canada, he knew more accurately than

General Burgoyne the situation of the country, the manners of the inhabitants, and the extent of its resources; and he would have been more aware of the difficulties to be encountered, and better prepared to surmount them. General Burgoyne commenced his operations at the head of 7173 British and German troops, exclusive of a corps of artillery; and several nations of Indians, inhabiting the back settlements of the province and the borders of the Lakes, joined this army, the acceptance of whose services has been loudly condemned as abhorrent to religion and humanity; but it may be urged, in extenuation of the seeming atrocity of the measure, that General Burgoyne was induced to adopt it from a well-grounded supposition that, if he refused their offers, they would instantly join the enemy.

General Burgoyne and his army set out from St. John's on the 16th of June, and proceeding up Lake Champlain, landed near Crown Point, where he met the Indians in congress; and, in compliance with their customs, gave them a war-feast, and made a speech designed to direct their military ardour to proper objects, and to mitigate their natural ferocity. He soon after issued a proclamation, or manifesto, apprizing the colonists of the dangers impending over them, should they resist his Majesty's arms, and amplifying the terrors of a savage foe let loose upon them, in lofty or rather bombastic language. After a short stay at Crown Point, the army embarked again on the lake, and continued their course to Ticonderoga, where the Americans appeared to be in great force. From the natural strength of this fortress, and some additional works lately constructed, much difficulty was expected to attend the siege; on the approach of the English, however, it was suddenly



evacuated in the night of the 5th of July, the garrison retreating by land, and sending their baggage, provisions, and stores in batteaux up the South river. On discovering the flight of the enemy, preparations were immediately made for a vigorous pursuit both by land and water. The greatest part of their naval force was captured or destroyed by General Burgoyne near the falls of Skenesborough ; and the rear of their army was overtaken next morning, and entirely defeated by Brigadier-general Frazer, after an obstinate action, in which the British had about 120 killed and wounded: the Americans lost about 200 killed, and as many prisoners ; and it was supposed that not less than 600 wounded died in the woods : the van, commanded by General St. Clair, fled with great precipitation to Fort Edward, on the North or Hudson's river, where General Schuyler, commander in chief of the American northern army, had fixed his head quarters.

General Burgoyne rested his troops for some days at Skenesborough, and then set off with an intention of taking the road that leads to Hudson's river, and thence to Albany, in order to open a communication with Lake George, on which he had embarked the heavy artillery and baggage. In this undertaking the men had infinite difficulties to encounter ; swamps and morasses were to be passed, and bridges to be constructed not only over creeks, but over ravines and gullies. The roads were also to be cleared of forest trees, which had been cut down for the purposes of obstruction, and were laid across with their branches interwoven. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, in a sultry season of the year, and in a close country, which the numerous insects render almost intolerable to Europeans, the royal army endured the fatigue



with the utmost cheerfulness; their slow progress, however, afforded the Americans time to recover from their first panic, and to recruit their strength. On the advance of the British troops, they retreated down the river to Saratoga, where General Schuyler was joined by a reinforcement of men and artillery under the command of General Arnold; after which the whole body was judiciously posted in a central situation, on an island in the shape of an half-moon called Still-water, about eight miles from Albany. General Burgoyne's army did not reach Fort Edward till the 30th of July; but the joy with which the sight of the North river, so long the object of their hopes and wishes, inspired the troops, seemed to be considered as an ample compensation for their time and labours. They now bent all their efforts to bring forward provisions and stores from Fort George, in order to form a magazine for their subsistence in their farther progress through the wild, uncultivated country they had yet to traverse; so ineffectual, however, were their utmost exertions, that on the 15th of August they had only four days' provision in store; and the general, understanding that large supplies of cattle, corn, and other necessities for the use of the enemy, were collected at Bennington, about twenty-four miles to the eastward of Hudson's river, detached Colonel Baum, at the head of 600 men, to surprise the place, he himself moving with the rest of the army up the eastern bank of the river, and encamping nearly opposite to Saratoga. The colonel, finding his destination discovered, and his force inadequate to the purpose, halted on the second day's march within seven miles of Bennington, whence he communicated intelligence of his situation to General Burgoyne, who dispatched

500 Germans, under Lieutenant-colonel Breyman, to his assistance. But the commanding officer at Bennington, being joined by a body of 1000 men who happened to be then on their route to General Schuyler's camp, advanced with the utmost rapidity, surrounded Colonel Baum's small corps, forced their intrenchments, made themselves masters of their cannon, and after a brave resistance, in which Baum and the greater part of his associates fell, compelled the rest to take shelter in the woods. Breyman, ignorant of this disaster, came up just in time to join the fugitives; and being suddenly attacked, escaped with difficulty, and with the loss of his artillery: 600 men were sacrificed in this unfortunate expedition. In the mean time, Colonel St. Leger, who commanded a separate corps on the Mohawk river, had, in conjunction with Sir John Johnson and a great body of Indians, invested Fort Stanwix; but a report of Arnold's approach having alarmed the savages, who threatened to quit the besieging army if a retreat was not immediately commenced, the colonel found himself obliged, on the 22d of August, to raise the siege, leaving behind him his artillery and stores.

General Burgoyne heard of these misfortunes, which principally contributed to the ruin of his expedition, nearly at the same time. The Canadians and Indians who effected their retreat from Baum and Breyman's corps, dispirited their countrymen by exaggerating the valour of the Americans who had driven them back, so that an extensive defection took place among the Indians, and the Canadian boatmen and drivers employed with the army took every opportunity to return home, although it was known that many were killed by the Indian deserters, who thus obtained a scalp to exhibit as a trophy. The rewards which



General Burgoyne gave to the savages for living prisoners bore no estimation in comparison with their scalps, and his restricting them in this point was made a strong ground for quitting him; so that whilst the Americans abused him for cruelty, the Indians deserted him for the want of it. That these remorseless savages were little in the habit of distinguishing between friends and foes was instanced in the murder of Miss Macrea, in the innocence of youth and bloom of beauty, on the very day of her intended nuptials with a British officer. Mr. Jones, her lover, from an anxiety for her safety, engaged some Indians to remove her from among the Americans, and promised to reward the person who should bring her safe to him, with a barrel of rum. Two of the Indians, who had conveyed her some distance, disputed which of them should present her to her intended husband, both being anxious for the reward, when one of them, to prevent the other from receiving it, killed her with his tomakawk. General Burgoyne obliged the Indians to deliver up the murderer, threatening to put him to death, and his life was only spared upon the Indians agreeing to terms, which the general thought would be more efficacious than an execution, in preventing similar mischiefs.

About this period General Gates was appointed to supersede Schuyler in the command of the northern army, which was now formidable in numbers, and in high spirits on account of the late successes. General Burgoyne, having collected about thirty days' provisions, crossed the river by means of a bridge of boats, on the 13th and 14th of September, and encamped on the heights of Saratoga, the enemy not receding from their position at Still-water. His farther movements being greatly retarded by a heavy train of



artillery, and by the almost impassable state of the roads, the Americans, on the 19th of September, advanced a small distance from their camp to meet the royal army; and, after an action which continued from three in the afternoon till sun-set, the British were left masters of the field of battle, but derived no other advantage from the encounter, the loss on each side being nearly equal, and the Americans having retired only because the close of day made a retreat to their camp necessary. The royal army lay all night on their arms, and in the morning took a position within cannon-shot of the enemy, fortifying their right wing, and extending their left to the banks of the river; but their force was considerably weakened by the disinclination of the savages to stay any longer. They had been disappointed in their hopes of plunder; and the season for hunting, which they never on any account forego, was arrived. They accordingly deserted General Burgoyne, unmoved by any representations of the distress in which their secession would involve him. At this crisis, he received a letter, in cypher, from General Clinton, informing him of a design to make a diversion in his favour by an expedition up the North river; which he, in reply, urged the immediate performance of, declaring his intention to wait in his present post for some favourable turn of affairs till the 12th of October. Early in the month General Clinton accordingly proceeded, at the head of about 3000 men, with a naval force under Commodore Hotham, against Forts Clinton and Montgomery on the lower parts of the river, and took them by storm. An immense boom of rafts, extending from shore to shore, and strengthened by a chain weighing upwards of fifty tons, was also broken through; after

which Sir James Wallace, ascending the river with a flying squadron of light frigates, succeeded in burning a great number of American vessels; and General Vaughan, with a military detachment, landed at Esopus-creek, destroyed two batteries, and burnt the town to ashes, though the Americans left it without resistance. As we are persuaded that no British officer would wantonly commit such an act, we cannot entertain a doubt of its being designed to answer some military purpose. There was now little to oppose General Clinton's advance; but the loss which he had sustained, in the midst of his successes, and the apprehensions that his retreat would in the end be cut off, induced him to return to New York without risking any farther attempts to relieve the northern army, with the extremely perilous situation of which he was then unacquainted.

General Burgoyne's difficulties were in the mean time increasing rapidly, the strength of his opponents having been so greatly augmented as to render the possibility of his retreat extremely precarious, and his army being reduced to little more than 5000 men, who were limited to half the usual allowance of provisions; the horses were perishing for want of forage; and no intelligence was received of General Clinton's approach. Thus circumstanced, the general himself, with a detachment of 1500 men, made a movement to the right on the 7th of October, to discover if there were any means of forcing a passage. The Americans, perceiving the British army thus weakened, compelled them to retire within their lines, and immediately stormed them in different parts with uncommon fierceness, under a heavy and well-supported fire of artillery, grape-shot, and musketry. Arnold, who led on the attack, being severely wound-



ed, his party, after long and repeated efforts, was repulsed: but the Americans were more successful in another quarter, having forced the intrenchments defended by the German troops, who were totally routed, with the loss of their baggage, tents, and artillery. General Frazer, Colonel Breyman, and several other officers of note, fell on this unfortunate day; a considerable number were wounded; and about 200 prisoners taken by the enemy, who obtained from the spoils of the field a large supply of ammunition, under a scarcity of which they had long laboured. As they had also made a lodgment, General Burgoyne felt the necessity of an immediate change of position; and, amidst the horrors of a night so fatally ushered in, retreated with great celerity and ability to the heights in the rear of his former encampment. Next day, October the 8th, being sensible that nothing less than a signal and decisive action could extricate him, the general repeatedly offered battle to the enemy, which they prudently declined, in hopes of turning his right, so as to enclose him on all sides. On discovering their intentions, he fell back to Saratoga, where he found the passes already occupied by the Americans. The farther shores of the river were also lined with numerous detachments of troops, which, with the assistance of their batteaux, entirely commanded the navigation; so that the only means of escape seemed to be by a rapid nocturnal march to Fort Edward, each soldier being ordered to carry his provision on his back; but intelligence being received that the high grounds between Fort Edward and Fort George were every where secured and fortified, the attempt was considered hopeless; and the stock of provisions being nearly exhausted, it was resolved, at a council of war, on the 13th of



October, that terms of capitulation should be proposed to General Gates. After a short negotiation, a convention was concluded, by which it was agreed that the British army should march out of the camp with the honours of war, and then lay down their arms; and be allowed a free embarkation from Boston to Europe, upon condition of their not serving again in America during the present war, unless exchanged by cartel. The terms, considering the increasing force and advantageous situation of the enemy, were unexceptionable. When the vanquished regiments piled their arms, the generosity of the American commander would not suffer an individual to leave his camp to witness the sad spectacle; but congress afterwards suspended the execution of the treaty, and unjustifiably detained the British troops at Boston. Such was the catastrophe of an army, consisting, at its departure from Canada, of above 10,000 men, but reduced, by the sword, by famine, hardship, and disease, to little more than half the original number.

General Burgoyne, reduced from the lofty language of his manifesto to the necessity of recrimination, laid the blame of his miscarriages upon Sir William Howe, for not having sent a force for co-operation up the North river to Albany; on Lord George Germaine, for having tied up his hands by the peremptory tenor of his orders; and on the slowness with which the Germans had marched to Bennington, the source of his distresses. But it was urged, in reply, that the force put under his command for the intended expedition was nearly, if not fully, equal to what he himself had required; that he ought not, on any doubtful prospect of a co-operating army from New York, to have given up his commu-

nication with the Lakes; and that his conduct in sending so small a detachment to Bennington, consisting of foreigners, and of all foreigners the slowest in their motions, was an absurdity bordering on infatuation. It was the opinion of military men that he encumbered himself with too much artillery, and that if his advance had been more rapid, the Americans were so dispirited by the flight from Ticonderoga that they would have been unable either to collect an army, or to inspire it with that confidence which is necessary to ensure success.

As the accounts of this disastrous termination of the campaign on the frontiers of Canada had not reached England before the meeting of Parliament on the 20th of November, the speech from the throne expressed his Majesty's confidence, that the spirit and intrepidity of his forces would be attended with important success; but intimated the necessity of preparing for such farther operations as the contingencies of the war, and the obstinacy of the rebels, might render expedient: though repeated assurances were received from foreign powers of their pacific dispositions, yet as the armaments in the ports of France and Spain continued, a considerable augmentation of the navy was thought advisable: these various services would require large supplies; and nothing, it was added, could relieve the royal mind from the concern felt for the heavy charge they must bring on the people, but a perfect conviction of their being necessary for the welfare and essential interests of the kingdom: at the close of the speech, his Majesty said, he should steadily pursue the measures engaged in for the re-establishment of constitutional subordination through the several parts of his dominions; but should ever be watchful for an opportunity of

putting a stop to the effusion of the blood of his subjects, and to the calamities of war: he still hoped that the deluded and unhappy multitude would return to their allegiance, and enable him to accomplish, what he should consider as the greatest happiness of his life, and the greatest glory of his reign, the restoration of peace, order, and confidence to his American colonies. In the House of Commons, the address was opposed by the Marquis of Granby, who moved an amendment, recommending measures of accommodation, and an immediate cessation of hostilities, which, after a long discussion, was rejected by a majority of 243 to 86. The Earl of Chatham was not more successful in his endeavours to carry a similar amendment in the House of Lords. His speech was full of those bold and glowing strains of declamatory eloquence, for which he was particularly distinguished. "I will not join," said he, "in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace. The smoothness of flattery cannot avail—cannot save us in this rugged and awful crisis. It is necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth. We must dispel the delusion and the darkness which envelope it; and display, in its full danger and true colours, the ruin that is brought to our doors."—He then drew a melancholy picture of the degradation of the glories of England, saying, "'But yesterday, and England might have stood against the world: now, none so poor to do her reverence!'"—I use," he added, "the words of a poet; but though it be poetry, it is no fiction.—France, my lords, has insulted you: she has encouraged and sustained America: the people whom you affect to call contemptible rebels are abetted against you, supplied with every military store, their interests consulted, and their ambassadors entertained, by your



inveterate enemy ; and our ministers dare not interpose with effect." His lordship argued that the present was the only crisis of time and situation for opening a treaty with the Americans. "In their negotiations with France," said he, "they have, or think they have, reason to complain : though it be notorious that they have received from that power important supplies, and assistance of various kinds ; yet it is certain they expected it in a more decisive and immediate degree." America is in ill humour with France on some points that have not entirely answered her expectations : let us wisely take advantage of every possible moment of reconciliation."—The consequences of the war, the manner in which it had been carried on, and the impossibility of conquering America, received a gloss of novelty from his lordship's powers of description. "In three campaigns," said he, "we have done nothing, and suffered much.—You may swell every expense, strain every effort, accumulate every assistance, traffic and barter with every pitiful German despot that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign prince ; your attempts will be for ever vain and impotent : doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely ; for it irritates to an incurable resentment the minds of your enemies, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty. Your own army is infected with the contagion of these illiberal allies. If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country I never would lay down my arms—never ; never ; never ! But, my lords, who is the man, that, in addition to these disgraces and mischiefs, has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping

knife of the savage: to call into civilized alliance the wild and inhuman habitant of the woods? to delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of this barbarous war against our brethren?—Besides these murderers and plunderers, let me ask our ministers, what other allies have they acquired? What other powers have they associated to their cause? Have they entered into alliance with the king of the gypsies? Nothing, my lords, is too low or too ludicrous to be consistent with their counsels.” Lord Chatham then drew a deplorable picture of the weak and unprepared condition of the country; we had not, he said, twenty ships of the line sufficiently manned, the river of Lisbon was in the possession of the enemy, and the seas were swept by American privateers. His lordship concluded by urging an immediate cessation of hostilities, and a long and vehement debate ensued. Lord Sandwich acknowledged the noble earl’s amazing powers of oratory, but remarked that oratory was one thing, and truth, reason, and conviction another; that when the matter which had been urged was separated from the manner, it would be found to contain nothing that could induce their lordships to dissent from the original address; he stated that forty-two ships of the line were in commission in Great Britain, thirty-five of which were completely manned, and ready for sea at a moment’s warning; that the force under Lord Howe consisted of six ships of the line, besides eighty-seven frigates, sloops, and vessels of war; and that the great number of ships taken or destroyed by our fleet on that station, and the few losses we had sustained in those seas, afforded the best reply to the exaggerated account of the ravages and insults of the American privateers. With such a force, Great

Britain could, he said, have nothing to fear from France and Spain, even supposing them to be bent upon hostilities, and as to our having lost the port of Lisbon, the information was perfectly new to him. The Portuguese court had not only given us the most solemn assurances of friendship, but had forbid our rebellious subjects to enter their ports. France, so far from having treated us with indignity or insult, had all along paid the utmost attention to our remonstrances, had forbid American privateers to enter her ports with prizes, and had compelled the restoration of two prizes taken there. In regard to the employment of foreigners, if the Americans, his lordship asked, were applauded for procuring the assistance of French officers, was the mother country to be denied the exercise of the same prudence? The employment of Indians, he said, was a matter of necessity; they were found in the country, and whoever made war there must have them for friends or enemies. Lord Suffolk remarked, that, in such a war, it was perfectly justifiable to use all the means that God and nature had put into our hands, on which Lord Chatham suddenly rose; "I am astonished," he exclaimed, "I am shocked to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this House, or in this country. My lords, I did not intend to have encroached again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation—I feel myself impelled to speak. We are called upon as members of this House, as men, as Christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity. 'That God and nature put into our hands!' What ideas of God and nature that noble lord may entertain I know not, but I know that such detestable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! attribute the



sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife!—to the cannibal savage torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims! Such notions shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend and this most learned bench to vindicate the religion of their God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops, to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn—upon the judges, to interpose the purity of their ermine to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships, to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution.” His lordship proceeded to state, that he considered the employment of savages by the British as more reprehensible than the use of blood hounds by Spain against the natives of Mexico, and concluded thus: “I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head upon my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous principles.” The amendment was rejected by a majority of 97 to 28; and the question on the address was then carried without a division.

A motion in the committee of supply, on the 26th of November, for 60,000 seamen for the service of 1778, passed without a division; and, on the same day, the attorney-general moved for the renewal,

during a certain limited term, of the bill passed last session for the suspension of the *habeas corpus* law in certain cases of piracy and treason. Although the bill was warmly opposed, it was carried, on the third reading, by a majority of 116 to 60. The number of troops to be employed in America was fixed at 55,000, after many severe animadversions on the mode of conducting every branch of the service.

On the 2d of December Mr. Fox moved for a committee of the whole House to inquire into the state of the nation, to which the minister agreed, but a motion for certain papers to elucidate the subject was negatived by a majority of 178 against 89, although intelligence arrived, during the debate, that a similar motion, made by the Duke of Richmond in the other House, had been agreed to by the lords in administration. In the course of his speech Mr. Fox compared Lord George Germaine, the minister who presided over American affairs, to Dr. Sangrado. "Bleeding," he said, "was his only prescription for all ills. Should mortal symptoms appear in the body politic in consequence of this regimen, still this state empiric will persist in crying out for more blood, merely because he has staked his reputation on the assertion that this is the only effectual remedy."

On the following day, (December the 3d,) the disclosure of the melancholy catastrophe at Saratoga took place; when, after a period of silent astonishment and consternation, a torrent of invective was poured forth by the leaders of the opposition against the ministers, whose pride, ignorance, and incapacity, they averred, had occasioned a more signal disgrace and calamity than had ever before, in the most disastrous war, befallen the British arms. Lord North acknowledged that he had indeed been unfortunate,

but that his intentions were ever just and upright; that he had originally been, in a manner, forced into an office which he would most willingly and gladly resign, if the surrender of his place and honours would facilitate the attainment of that peace and reconciliation for which he had ever earnestly wished. On the 5th Lord Chatham moved, in the House of Peers, that copies of all orders and instructions to General Burgoyne relative to the northern expedition be laid before the House. Holding up a paper, he said that he had the King's speech in his hand, and a deep sense of the public calamity in his heart. That speech contained a most unfaithful picture of the state of public affairs; it had a specious outside, was full of hopes, while every thing within was full of danger. A system destructive of all faith and confidence had been introduced, his lordship affirmed, within the last fifteen years at St. James's, by which pliable men, not capable men, had been raised to the highest posts of government, and a few persons had obtained an ascendancy where no personal ascendancy should exist. The spirit of delusion had gone forth; ministers had imposed on the people; Parliament had been induced to sanctify the imposition; a visionary phantom of revenue had been conjured up for the basest of purposes, but it was now for ever vanished. The motion was rejected by a majority of 40 to 19, on the ground that the intelligence, though it could scarcely be doubted, had not been officially received, and that, if true, General Burgoyne might be daily expected home, when his own explanation would throw more light on the subject than any papers that could be furnished. Lord Chatham immediately moved for an address to obtain copies of all the orders or treaties relative to the employment of



Indian savages, and of the instructions given by General Burgoyne to Colonel St. Leger. The debate was conducted with unusual acrimony; Lord Gower accused the mover of inconsistency in reprobating measures which he had himself sanctioned in the last reign, on which Lord Chatham reproached him with petulance and misrepresentation. Indians, he confessed, had crept into the service during the last war; but their employment had never been sanctioned by him in his official capacity; the remark was therefore a mere quibble, and came, he added, with a bad grace from one, who, at the time of the transaction alluded to, was immersed in pleasure, and indulging in all the variety of youthful dissipation. Lord Gower warmly retorted these unwarrantable liberties of speech; he had not, he said, been petulant, though others may have been insolent. The noble earl's insinuations were equally illiberal, unmanly, and untrue. The question was, Were Indians employed while he was minister? and did he mean to plead ignorance as an apology for a conduct which he had so highly condemned? He repeated that the noble earl himself, while at the head of administration last war, employed the Indians under instructions and treaties of the most sanguinary tendency; and, in order to show that this assertion was not made for the purpose of temporary delusion, an extract was read from a treaty, made while Mr. Pitt was secretary of state, with an Indian nation, one condition of which was, that they should kill and scalp every Frenchman who came within their country. Lord Chatham, evidently confused, denied that he knew any thing of the matter, and called upon the noble lord who at that time commanded in America to declare the truth. Lord Amherst reluctantly own-

ed, that Indians had been employed on both sides; but asserted that the French employed them first, and that we only followed the example. His lordship added that he certainly should not have ventured to do so, if he had not received orders to that purpose; that he was desired to make treaties with the Indian powers, and was charged with it in his instructions; a copy of which he should at any time be ready to produce, with his Majesty's permission. The Earl of Denbigh called Lord Chatham the great oracle with the short memory, asserting, that the returns of the army must have shown that the Indians were employed last war; and that, as his lordship, when in office, always contended for guidance and direction, he could not be ignorant of the matter, if he had not lost his memory. Lord Shelburne suggested, that the orders sent at that time to the commander in America might have proceeded from the board of trade. Lord Chatham said he was sure they had not passed regularly through his office, and that his late Majesty had too much humanity to give his formal sanction to such a satanic measure, but Lord Suffolk observed that all instructions to governors and commanders in chief necessarily came through the office of secretary of state, and were countersigned by the King. The Earl of Dunmore, late governor of Virginia, declared that the Americans had first employed the savages; that he himself had been attacked by a party of Indians set on by them; and that, at the very beginning of the disturbances, the Virginians had used every effort to induce the savages to join them, but that the chiefs of one of the tribes made this answer to their application. "What! shall we fight against the great King over the water, who in the last war sent such large armies, and so much money here, to defend you

from the devastations of the French, and from our attacks? No: if you have so little gratitude; we will not assist so base a purpose." His lordship added, that the Virginians, finding themselves thus disappointed, had dressed up some of their own people like Indians, with a view to terrify the forces under his command. Lord Chatham's motion was thrown out by the previous question, the majority being 40 to 18.

On the 10th of December, the royal assent was given to the *habeas corpus* suspension bill, and to the land and malt tax bills; and as the establishments both of the navy and army for the ensuing year were settled by grants for maintaining 60,000 seamen and 20,000 land forces, besides foreign auxiliaries, and no business of immediate exigency remained for the consideration of Parliament, an early recess was determined upon, to afford time for a due preparation for those inquiries which had been agreed to by the servants of the crown in both Houses. It is also probable that the ministry wanted some leisure to deliberate upon and concert the most effectual means of supplying the place of Burgoyne's unfortunate army, and filling up the chasms which death, sickness, or desertion, had made in the remaining force in America. On the day, therefore, that the above bills were passed, and as soon as one of Wilkes's ill-supported motions for the repeal of the declaratory law was disposed of by a majority of 160 to 12, Lord Beauchamp moved for an adjournment of the Commons to the 20th of January. A recess of six weeks, in so critical a situation, was strongly opposed, but the adjournment was carried by 155 against 68. Next day a similar motion, in the House of Lords, was no less strenuously contested. Lord



Chatham declared that it was with grief and astonishment he heard a proposal so extraordinary at a crisis so urgent ; when, he would be bold to say, events of a most alarming tendency, little expected or foreseen, would shortly happen. The adjournment was, however, supported, on a division, by 47 against 17.

The predictions of ministers, on receiving the mortifying intelligence of General Burgoyne's surrender, that the public spirit would soon find a remedy, were speedily verified, offers being shortly after made to government, by several persons of rank and influence, to raise regiments by subscription, suggesting that these new levies would soon be adequate to all the purposes of home-defence, and would leave administration at full liberty to send out the old battalions from Great Britain and Ireland to prosecute the war in America with vigour. Manchester and Liverpool took the lead in this business, each raising a regiment of 1000 men ; and the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, following the example, contributed two regiments ; several individuals undertook the raising of regiments in the Highlands ; and many independent companies were levied with alacrity in Wales. The corporations of London and Bristol refused to co-operate in these efforts, but large sums were subscribed by individuals in various parts, and 15,000 soldiers were, by private bounty, presented to the state. The first business of importance after the recess was a motion for an account of the number of men raised, and the names of the commanding officers. The raising a body of forces, without the knowledge or advice of Parliament, was reprobated as alarming and unconstitutional, but the ministry defended the perfect innocence of the measure with respect both to constitution and law, and contended

that the American war was just and popular. The motion was granted. This subject was frequently renewed in both Houses, but the opposition failed in all their attempts to get some censure passed on the measure. A motion in the committee of supply for the sum of 286,632*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* for clothing the new troops was very strongly opposed, the minority being 130 against 223 who supported it.

Mr. Fox opened the inquiry into the state of the nation in a committee of the House of Commons on the 2d of February. He entered into a long review of the measures which led to the war, and of the manner in which it had been conducted, and argued, that it was impossible for any country to fall within so few years from the high pitch of power and glory which we had done, without some radical error in its government; that at a time when we were in immediate danger of encountering the whole force of the house of Bourbon, united with that of America, the army in England and Ireland had been so reduced, by the continual drain of the war, as to fall several thousand men short of the usual peace establishment; and that to abandon the ministerial plan of conquest was a matter not of choice but necessity. He therefore moved a resolution that no part of the national force in these kingdoms, or in the garrisons of Gibraltar or Minorca, should be sent to America. No debate ensued, nor was any reply whatever made to this speech; but the question being called for, the motion was rejected on a division by a majority of 259 to 165. A motion nearly to the same purport, and made on the same day in a similar committee of the whole House of Lords by the Duke of Richmond, was rejected, after some debate, by a majority of about three to one.

In a few days after this Mr. Burke moved for papers relative to the employment of the Indians. The Indian mode of making war, he said, far exceeded the ferocity of any other barbarians recorded in ancient or modern history, their chief glory consisting in the number of human scalps which they acquired, and their chief delight in the practice of torturing, mangling, roasting, and devouring their captives. The attempt to prevent these enormities was unavailing; the Indians employed both by General Burgoyne and Colonel St. Leger had indiscriminately murdered men, women, and children—friends and foes—armed or unarmed, without distinction. He painted in strong colours the horrid murder of Miss Macrea on the morning of her intended marriage with an officer of the King's troops, and the massacre, in cold blood, of the prisoners taken in an engagement near Fort Stanwix. After a long debate the motion was negatived by a majority of 223 against 137.

On the 17th of February Lord North, having given notice that he had digested a plan of conciliation, moved for leave to bring in two bills: one for removing all doubts and apprehensions concerning taxation by the Parliament of Great Britain in any of the colonies and plantations in North America; the other, to enable his Majesty to appoint commissioners with sufficient powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting the disorders now subsisting in certain of the colonies in America. In opening his plan, Lord North acknowledged, that he had always known that American taxation could never produce a beneficial revenue—that it was not his policy to tax them, but that he had found them taxed when he unfortunately came into administration



—and that he could not possibly suspect the regulations he had introduced in relation to the tea duty could have been productive of such fatal consequences. With respect to the coercive acts, they had appeared necessary to remedy the distempers of the time; the events of the war had turned out very differently from what he had a right to expect from the great and well appointed force sent over; but to events, and not expectations, he must make his plan conform. The appointment of five commissioners was in contemplation, who should be enabled to treat with the congress as if it were a legal body, or with any individuals in their present civil capacities, or military commands;—that they should have a power to order a suspension of arms, to suspend the operations of all laws, and to grant all sorts of pardons. A preliminary renunciation of independency would not be required of America, and a contribution in any shape from America was not to be insisted upon as a *sine qua non* of the treaty. These concessions were founded on reason and propriety; and if the question were asked, Why they had not been sooner proposed? he should reply, that the moment of victory, for which he had anxiously waited, seemed to him the only proper season for offering terms of concession. But though the result of the war had proved unfavourable, he would no longer delay the desirable and necessary work of reconciliation. These propositions were assailed from all quarters. The Tory party lamented the degradation which the bills would bring upon the government of this country; insisted that our resources were great and inexhaustible; and bitterly deplored that pusillanimity in our councils, which, after so great an expense of blood and treasure, could submit, not only to give up all the objects of the con-

test, but to enter into a public treaty with armed rebels, which, after all, would not produce the end proposed. The opposition members expressed their reluctant agreement in the probable truth of this prediction; but they would not, they said, impede or delay the execution of a plan which had conciliation for its object. Mr. Fox asked, What censure would be found sufficient, on those ministers who had adjourned Parliament, in order to make a proposition of conciliation, and then neglected to do it until France had concluded a treaty with the United and Independent States of America, and acknowledged them as such? He did not speak from surmise, he had it from authority he could not question, that the treaty he mentioned had been signed in Paris ten days before; he therefore wished that the noble lord would give the House satisfaction on that interesting point. Lord North reluctantly acknowledged, that it was but too probable that such a treaty was in agitation, though he had no authority to pronounce absolutely that it was concluded.

At the opening of the budget, a few days after, the minister resumed a tone of confidence, and descanted on the strength, wealth, and stability of the country, though he confessed that he had been obliged to borrow money on disadvantageous terms; he, however, looked forward with rapture to the accessions which the sinking fund would receive from the gradual extinction of exchequer annuities. The votes of supply for the current year, amounting to about 13,000,000*l.* rendered it necessary to raise 6,000,000*l.* by way of loan, each subscriber of 100*l.* to have an annuity of three per cent. redeemable by Parliament, besides a farther annuity of two and a half per cent. for thirty years, and four lottery tickets, at 10*l.* each, for every 500*l.*

subscribed. To pay the interest of this loan, the minister proposed a tax upon houses, to be regulated by the rent, those under 5*l.* a year being exempted, but from 5*l.* to 50*l.* to be rated at 6*d.* in the pound, and from 50*l.* and upwards at 1*s.* to be paid by the occupier: and an additional duty of eight guineas per tun on all French wines imported, and four guineas per tun on all other foreign wine. The new house tax gave rise to a warm debate, the gentlemen in opposition asserting that it was not only a land tax in effect, but that it would also be found exceedingly grievous and disproportionate: tradesmen of every denomination were obliged to take houses commodiously situated, however high the rent might be: hence it was evident that the heaviest burdens would often be imposed on those who were least able to bear the pressure. The resolutions were, however, agreed to, when Mr. Gilbert, who was himself in office, and closely connected with one branch of ministry, moved, that, in the present exigency of affairs, a tax of 5*s.* in the pound be laid on all salaries and pensions issuing out of the exchequer, with a few exceptions, during the continuance of the war. The motion was carried in the committee, on the 9th of March, by 100 against 82 voices; but on the report, next day, it was rejected by a majority of six, the numbers being 147 to 141.

Notwithstanding the assurances of friendship for Great Britain which had been invariably held forth by France and Spain, those powers had, for some time, been objects of just suspicion, supplies of money, arms, and ammunition, being clandestinely conveyed beyond the Atlantic, while their ports displayed the bustle of hostile preparation. The British ministry were very reluctantly persuaded that powers who had



foreign settlements of their own, would, by becoming the abettors of colonial independency, set an example which might easily be directed against themselves; the intimation of Mr. Fox in the House of Commons, on the 17th of February, was, however, too well-founded, two treaties, one of commerce, and another of defensive alliance, having been signed at Paris on the 6th of that month, by the Chevalier Gerard in behalf of the French King, and by Dr. Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, on the part of the United States. The first, as its title imports, regulated the commerce to be carried on between France and America; and the other was intended to secure the sovereignty and independence of the revolted colonies. The nature of these engagements having been formally notified to the court of Great Britain on the 13th of March, a message was sent by the King to both Houses of Parliament on the 17th, to inform them, that a rescript had been delivered by the French ambassador, containing a direct avowal of a treaty of amity, commerce, and alliance, recently concluded with America; in consequence of which offensive communication on the part of the court of France, his Majesty had sent orders to his ambassador to withdraw from that court; and, relying on the zealous support of his people, was prepared to exert all the force and resources of his kingdoms, to repel so unprovoked and unjust an aggression. The note of the French ambassador was conceived in terms of irony and derision. "The United States of North America," it said, "who were in full possession of independence, as pronounced by them on the 4th of July, 1776, having proposed to the King to consolidate, by a formal convention, the connexion begun to be established between the two nations, the respec-

tive plenipotentiaries have signed a treaty of friendship and commerce. The French King being determined to cultivate the good understanding subsisting between France and Great Britain, by every means compatible with his dignity and the good of his subjects, makes this proceeding known to the court of London, and declares that the contracting parties have paid great attention not to stipulate any exclusive advantages in favour of the French nation; and that the United States have reserved the liberty of treating with every nation whatever, upon the same footing of equality and reciprocity. In making this communication to the court of London, the King is firmly persuaded it will find new proofs of his Majesty's constant and sincere disposition for peace; and that his Britannic Majesty, animated by the same sentiments, will equally avoid every thing that may alter their good harmony; and that he will particularly take effectual measures to prevent the commerce between his Majesty's subjects and the United States of North America from being interrupted, and to cause all the usages received between commercial nations to be, in this respect, observed; and all those rules which can be said to subsist between the two crowns of France and Great Britain. In this just confidence, the under-signed ambassador thinks it superfluous to acquaint the British minister, that the King his master, being determined to protect effectually the lawful commerce of his subjects, and to maintain the dignity of his flag, has taken eventual methods, in concert with the United States of North America. Signed, Le M. de Noailles."

Addresses to the King, in consequence of his message, were voted by both Houses, expressing in warm terms their indignation at the conduct of France,—



at the enterprises of that restless and dangerous spirit of ambition and aggrandizement, which had so often invaded the rights and threatened the liberties of Europe: they gave his Majesty the strongest assurances of their most zealous assistance and support: and declared their firm confidence, that no considerations would divert or deter his faithful subjects from standing forth in the public defence, and from sustaining, with a steady perseverance, any extraordinary burdens and expenses which should be found necessary. Amendments were proposed in both Houses, praying the dismissal of ministers, which were rejected by large majorities.

At this crisis it became an object of the first importance to draw as tight as possible the bands of union between the loyal parts of the empire, and the situation of the Irish in particular seemed to require immediate regard, the sister kingdom having been too long subjected to oppressive and unnatural restrictions. Deprived of every incentive to industry, and shut out from every passage to wealth, she had never been clamorous or importunate in her complaints: she had gone the most forward lengths in serving the interests, and in defending the rights, of Great Britain: she had assisted in conquests from which she was to gain no advantage; and had omitted no opportunity of proving her attachment and loyalty. Commercial bondage having hitherto been her only reward, a revision of the Irish trade laws was proposed by Lord Nugent, and being entered into with great cordiality by the principal members of the opposition, the following resolutions were agreed to in a committee of the whole House of Commons:— 1st, that the Irish might be permitted to export directly to the British plantations, or to the settle-



ments on the coast of Africa, all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce or manufacture of that kingdom, or of Great Britain, wool and woollens only excepted; as also foreign certificate goods legally imported: 2d, that a direct importation into Ireland be allowed of all goods, wares, and merchandize, being the produce of the British plantations, tobacco only excepted: 3d, that the direct exportation of glass, manufactured in Ireland, be permitted to all places except Great Britain: 4th, that the importation of cotton yarn, the manufacture of Ireland, be allowed, duty free, into Great Britain; as also, 5th, the importation of Irish sail-cloth and cordage. The bills founded on these resolutions excited a great alarm amongst the commercial part of the British nation, who seemed to consider the admittance of Ireland to any participation in trade as destructive to their property and subversive of their rights. The Easter recess afforded time for preparing petitions against the bills, which soon poured in from every quarter; and it deserves mention, as an instance of mercantile prejudice, that, in several of them, the importation of Irish sail-cloth and of wrought iron was particularly specified as ruinous to the same manufactures in England; though it appeared, upon inquiry, that Ireland had long possessed those very privileges under the sanction of a positive law, but was so incapable of prosecuting such manufactures to any purpose of competition, that great quantities of both were annually exported to that country from England. Hence it might be fairly inferred that many of the other matters of apprehension were equally groundless, and suggested only by a jealous spirit of exclusion; the representations of the petitioners, however, had such influence on the disposition

of the House, that some openings in the African and West India trades, and a little enlargement of the freedom of exportation in a few other trifling articles, were the only concessions now obtained for Ireland; so that the measure could only be considered as an earnest of good intention, or a proof that the mist of prejudice was at length beginning to disperse.

While the plan for affording some redress to the grievances of the Irish was in agitation, a proscribed class in England, who had been almost forgotten in the patience with which for many years they had endured their sufferings, were also destined to experience the happy effects of a more liberal policy. On the 14th of May, Sir George Saville moved for leave to bring in a bill for the repeal of certain penalties imposed by an act of the 10th and 11th of William the Third, entitled an act for preventing the farther growth of Popery; which penalties the mover stated to be, the punishment of Popish priests or jesuits, as guilty of felony, who should be found to officiate in the services of their church; the forfeiture of estate to the next Protestant heir, in case of the education of the Romish possessor abroad; the power given to the son, or other nearest relation, being a Protestant, to take possession of the father's estate during the lifetime of the proprietor; and the depriving Papists of the power of acquiring any legal property by purchase. One of his principal views in proposing this repeal was, he said, to vindicate the honour, and to assert the principles, of the Protestant religion, to which all persecution was, or ought to be, wholly adverse. Sir George was ably seconded by Mr. Dunning, who went into a masterly discussion of the principle, objects, and past operation of the act which was intended to be repealed. The penalties in ques-

tion were disgraceful, he said, not only to religion, but to humanity. They were calculated to loosen all the bands of society,—to dissolve all social, moral, and religious obligations and duties,—to poison the sources of domestic felicity,—and to annihilate every principle of honour. The bill passed through the Commons without a single negative, and was but slightly opposed in the Upper House.

The committee on the state of the nation closed in the House of Lords on the 7th of April, when the Duke of Richmond moved for an address to the King, urging the necessity of instantly withdrawing his fleets and armies from the thirteen revolted provinces, and of dismissing his ministers, as the authors of every public calamity and disgrace. To secure the dependence of America was now, he said, impracticable: the sooner, therefore, we relinquished the claim, the better able we should be to save the remains of the empire from impending destruction. Lord Weymouth made an animated reply; but its spirit was soon lost in the sudden blaze of the Earl of Chatham's expiring genius. His extreme bodily weakness rendered it necessary for him to be supported on each side in going from his carriage into the House, and the peers of all parties paid a voluntary tribute of respect by standing while he passed to his place. He appeared pale and emaciated, but his eye retained all its native fire. It was "an eye, like Jove's, to threaten or command!" He delivered his speech with extraordinary energy, and was heard with marked attention. Taking one hand from his crutch, he raised it, and, casting his eyes towards Heaven, said, "I thank God, that I have been enabled to come here this day to perform my duty, and to speak on a subject which has so deeply impressed my mind.—I am



old and infirm—have one foot, more than one foot, in the grave—I am risen from my bed to stand up in the cause of my country—perhaps never again to speak in this House—to express my indignation at the pusillanimous, the disgraceful idea of yielding up the sovereignty of America. I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the hand of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but while I have sense and memory I will never consent to deprive the royal offspring of the house of Brunswick, the heirs of the Princess Sophia, of their fairest inheritance, and to tarnish the lustre of the nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and possessions. It is said we ought to make peace with America on any terms, and bring home our troops in order to protect ourselves; in short, that we should allow a foreign ambassador insolently to tell *us*, that *his* master had made a bargain for that commerce which was *our* natural right, and entered into a treaty with *our own* subjects, without so much as resenting it. Merciful God! to what a low ebb must this once great empire be now reduced, when any of her senators (pointing to the Duke of Richmond) can raise up his head, and with a grave face openly hold forth such timid, such dastardly counsels? This never was the language of Britain, and never shall be mine. What! can it be possible that we are the same people, who about sixteen years ago were the envy and admiration of all the world? Is not this England? Is not this the senate of Great Britain? And can we forget that we are Englishmen? Can we have forgotten that the nation has stood the Danish irruptions—the

Scotch inroads—the Norman conquests—the Spanish armada—and the various efforts of the Bourbon compacts? Of what, then, are we afraid? Why are we blinded by despair? Why should we sit down in ignominious tameness; and, with a desponding face, say to France, ‘Take from us what you will; take all we have; but do, pray, let us live and die in peace.’—Shame upon such disgraceful, such pitiful counsels! My God! how are we altered! What can have occasioned so sudden an alteration? Is the King still the same? I hope he is; but I fear there is something in the dark, something rotten near him; something lurking between him and his people, which has thus dismembered his empire, and tarnished his glory. But I trust that we still have resources, still have courage to punish the perfidy of France. Why, then, should we now give up all? and that too without a blow; without an attempt to resent the insults offered to us? If France and Spain are for war, why not try an issue with them? For, I again say, if we should fall in the attempt, let us fall decently; and if we cannot live with honour, let us die like men. Heaven forbid that we should be permitted to live one day for the purpose of making scourges for our own backs! At present I cannot point out the means for carrying on the war; but the internal resources of the kingdom are great, and I do deny that your lordships have any right to vote away the inheritance of thirteen American provinces from the royal family. Feeble and shattered as I am, yet so long as I have strength to raise myself on my crutches, so long as I can lift my hand, or utter a syllable, I will vote against the giving up the dependence of America on the sovereignty of Great Britain. Even if I should stand single, I will, to the last moment of my existence,



vote against a measure so dishonourable to my country. If my health would permit, I could speak for ever on this subject. The good of the nation is my sole ambition; and although I do earnestly pray for an honourable peace, yet I hope never to see such disgrace brought upon the kingdom as must arise from a peace produced by pusillanimous counsels, which any peace with America as independent states must be. I feel my mind agitated at the thoughts of it. My soul revolts. It spurns at the idea of American independency; and therefore I will, on every occasion, give it a negative.”—Here his lordship’s speech was cut short by extreme weakness. The Duke of Richmond, in reply, declared himself totally ignorant of the means by which we were to resist with success the combination of America with the house of Bourbon. He urged the noble lord to point out any possible mode, if he were able to do it, of making the Americans renounce that independence of which they were in possession. His grace added, that if HE could not, no man could, and that it was not in his power to change his opinion on the noble lord’s authority, unsupported by any reasons, but a recital of the calamities arising from a state of things not in the power of this country now to alter. Lord Chatham, who had appeared greatly moved during the reply, made an eager effort to rise at the conclusion of it, as if labouring with some great idea, and impatient to give full scope to his feelings; but, before he could utter a word, pressing his hand on his bosom, he fell down suddenly in a convulsive fit. The Duke of Cumberland, Lord Temple, and other lords near him, caught him in their arms, and helped to remove him into the Prince’s Chamber. Medical assistance being instantly obtained, his lordship in



some degree recovered, and was conveyed to his favourite villa at Hayes in Kent. As soon as the confusion occasioned by this melancholy incident subsided, the Duke of Richmond proposed to adjourn the business to the following day, which was complied with. The resumed debate served only to bring into fuller view the difference of opinion between the Rockingham and Chatham parties on the subject of American independence, the former contending for its recognition without delay or reserve, and the latter deprecating such a measure as the greatest of all political and national evils. The duke's motion for an address was rejected by a majority of 50 to 33.

The first appearances of Lord Chatham's recovery were soon found to be delusive. After lingering a few weeks, he expired, May the 11th, in the 70th year of his age. The House of Commons, on receiving intelligence of this event, unanimously agreed to a motion made by Colonel Barre, for interring the remains of the deceased earl at the public expense, with the farther addition, proposed by Mr. Rigby, that a monument should be erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey. Two days after, the like unanimity prevailed, on a motion for addressing the King, to make a permanent provision for the late earl's family, in consideration of his public services, and a clear annuity of 4000*l.* payable out of the civil list, was annexed to the earldom of Chatham, while it continued in the heirs of the deceased statesman; the sum of 20,000*l.* was also voted for the discharge of his debts and encumbrances. These propositions were not carried through the House of Lords with the same unanimity. A motion being made by the Earl of Shelburne, on the 13th of May, that the House should attend the funeral of the late earl, it was directly

opposed ; and the members being found equal upon a division, amounting to 16 on each side, the proxies were called for, when the motion was lost by a majority of 1, there being 20 against 19 who supported the question. The bill for settling an annuity on the inheritors of the title of Chatham, met also with a very strenuous opposition at its second reading ; the Duke of Chandos, Lord Bathurst the chancellor, and a few others, objecting to it as an unwarrantable lavishing away of the public money, at a time when the nation was groaning under a heavy load of debt, and engaged in a dangerous and expensive war. They farther expressed their fears, that a precedent of this kind might afterwards be made use of for factious purposes, and to the enriching of private families at the public expense. Their objections, however, were overruled by a majority of 42 to 11.

The decease of this illustrious person calls for a few remarks on his character and abilities. Nothing less than the fanaticism of party could hold him up as a patriot of the purest and most unyielding integrity. Ambition was his ruling passion, and in seeking to gratify it, we must own that he sometimes at least employed the means which other courtiers have done, and even sacrificed his private judgment to his advancement. No man, while out of office, ever opposed continental and German connexions with more force of argument, with more depth of political sagacity, than he did ; no man, when called to a situation under a sovereign with whom those connexions were a darling object, ever more ingeniously defended them. Without, however, claiming for this consummate statesman the envied and almost unattainable character of unsullied integrity, his conduct in administration evinced that great talents will, in that high

situation, generally prove even a substitute for virtue ; and that a *wise* minister will feel that he never can have a separate interest from the people whose councils he directs. Yet, as a minister, it must be allowed that Lord Chatham had one failing. Formed by nature for the most active and tempestuous scenes, he was too fond of war. As an orator he stands almost unrivalled in this country. In fire and energy he equalled Demosthenes ; in a vivid fancy, and a promptness of idea, he exceeded him. The best speakers of the time shrunk before the force of his eloquence. Lord Mansfield trembled at it ; and even the vigour of Lord Holland was inadequate to the contest. In private life the talents of Lord Chatham were alloyed by a mixture of pride and reserve ; but it was pride united with dignity. He was not selfish, but rather too inattentive to his private affairs. He was the man of the public ; and though he had certainly equal means with other ministers of amassing wealth, he chose rather to leave his family dependant on the bounty of that country which he had served, than to enrich them by its plunder. His political system was that of a staunch Whig ; and though he sometimes conceded to the wishes of the court, as he evidently did with respect to the German connexions, which he described emphatically as “ a millstone tied about his neck,” yet his enemies cannot charge him with ever having made a sacrifice of any great constitutional principle.

The disputes relative to the northern expedition were revived on the arrival of General Burgoyne, who returned to England on his parole ; he experienced a cold and indifferent reception from ministers, and was refused admission to the royal presence. Highly resenting this treatment, he avenged himself



by loud complaints of the misconduct of ministers; a mode of retaliation which contributed little to raise his character in the estimation of the public. He was subsequently ordered to rejoin his troops in America, whom the congress refused to release till the convention of Saratoga should be formally ratified. With this injunction he refused to comply; and he was therefore divested of all his posts and offices.

Towards the close of the session, the state and management of the navy was a subject of much warm discussion in both Houses, and various inquiries were moved and negatived. A message for a vote of credit excited many severe strictures on the conduct of ministers. A bill introduced by Sir P. J. Clerke, for restraining any member of the House of Commons from being concerned in any government contract, was carried through a first and second reading, and finally lost by a majority of only 2, the numbers being 115 against 113.

Notwithstanding the length and activity of the session, motions were made in both Houses to prevent the adjournment, which being rejected, the prorogation took place on the 3rd of June with a speech from the throne, in which his Majesty's desire to preserve the tranquillity of Europe was stated to have been uniform and sincere; he had made the faith of treaties and the law of nations the rule of his conduct; and that power by whom tranquillity should be disturbed, must answer to their subjects, and to the world, for all the fatal consequences of war; he trusted, that the experienced valour and discipline of the fleets and armies, with the loyal and united ardour of the nation, armed and animated in defence of every thing dear to them, would be able to defeat all the enterprises which the enemies of the crown

might presume to undertake, and convince them how dangerous it was to provoke the spirit and strength of Great Britain. The Commons were thanked for the cheerfulness with which they had granted the supplies for the service of the year, and the warmest acknowledgments were due, for the provision made for the more honourable support of the royal family.

The last particular referred to a bill passed in the course of the session for settling an annuity of 60,000*l.* on the six younger princes, of 30,000*l.* on the five princesses, and of 12,000*l.* on the son and daughter of the Duke of Gloucester; the annuities to take effect, in the first instance, on the death of his Majesty, and in the second, on the death of the Duke of Gloucester.

On the day his Majesty went to the House of Peers, the late attorney general took his seat by the title of Lord Thurlow, Baron Ashfield; and was presented with the great seal, Earl Bathurst having resigned it. Mr. Wedderburne succeeded his lordship in the office of attorney general, and Mr. Wallace was appointed solicitor general.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

ON entering upon the history of another war with France, we will endeavour to explain the motives which prompted the cabinet of Versailles to depart from the pacific course it had pursued since the peace of 1763. In the survey of Europe at the close of the war, it was observed, that the internal troubles of that country afforded the best pledges of her external inoffensiveness, it being evident, from the nature of



the disputes which then commenced between the King and the Parliaments, that any rash attempt on his part to embroil himself with his neighbours would endanger the overthrow of the French monarchy. These domestic conflicts were kept up with increasing violence till the year 1771, when Louis the Fifteenth had recourse to the desperate expedient of arresting, by virtue of *lettres de cachet*, the members of the parliament of Paris, banishing most of the provincial parliaments, and substituting in their room other tribunals entirely devoted to the will of the sovereign. This was the most fatal shock ever given to public opinion in a country where the spirit of liberty began to be widely diffused, and where the undisguised horrors of despotism could only serve to engender anarchy and sedition. A republican party was visibly forming, and as the monarch became every day an object of greater reproach and execration, it is probable that the small-pox, of which he died in 1774, rescued him from a much worse fate, that of perishing in the ruins of a convulsed empire. The young King, to whom the appellation of "*LOUIS le désiré*" was unanimously given, began his reign with several popular measures; and of these none could be more likely to conciliate and secure the affections of his subjects than the removal of the old ministry, and the restoration of the parliaments. The latter, however, was delayed for several months, and even then accompanied with some ungracious circumstances, a censure for their resistance to the late King's commands, and a peremptory injunction to conform exactly to a royal ordinance, read to them on the occasion, containing many painful, and, as they might suppose, unconstitutional limitations of their authority. It required greater talents than Louis the Six-



teenth possessed, and greater integrity and patriotism than prevailed in his council, to unite at this juncture real dignity with judicious condescension, and to establish his throne in the hearts of his people, by showing a more sincere regard for their rights and happiness than for the plenitude of his own power. The same want of wisdom soon appeared in the system of foreign politics adopted by the new administration. The King himself was of a mild and peaceable temper, but his natural indolence, and the mediocrity of his passions, as well as of his abilities, threw the reins of government into other hands; and the prevailing party at court, of whom the Queen was considered as the head, thought the quarrel between England and her colonies a favourable opportunity for striking a decisive blow, and rising upon the ruin of a detested rival. The desire of avenging the disgraces of the last war, and of grasping at the same time the advantages of the American trade, rendered the council blind to the probable consequences of making Frenchmen the champions of colonial independency, of fanning in their breasts the sparks of republican enthusiasm, and of importing with the tobacco of Virginia, which was held out as a great commercial allurements, the weeds of faction and licentiousness. Unchecked by any apprehensions of this kind, the court of France secretly encouraged the Americans in their revolt, and sent them supplies of money, arms, and ammunition; striving, at the same time, to keep up the appearances of neutrality till Great Britain should be more nearly exhausted in the contest; but the disaster which happened to Burgoyne's army, and the conciliatory measures about to be adopted by the British cabinet, obliged the French ministry to throw off the mask sooner than was at first intended. They

knew that the Americans, notwithstanding the success at Saratoga, still laboured under great difficulties; and that, for want of internal resources, whilst their foreign trade was nearly annihilated by the British cruisers, it was almost impossible for them, without assistance, to keep a respectable army in the field for any length of time; they therefore feared that, under such unpromising circumstances, they would be induced to accept the very liberal terms which the mother country was going to propose at the present crisis. It was by urging these points very strongly, that Dr. Franklin and his associates accomplished the grand object of their commission at Paris, and procured the signing of the treaties before mentioned, by which France pledged herself to maintain the absolute independence of a foreign people, while she held, or hoped to hold, her native sons in vassalage and chains.

An event, which took place about the same time on the continent of Europe, is also supposed to have had some share in precipitating those resolutions of the French council. The Elector of Bavaria having died without issue on the 30th of December, 1777, was succeeded by the Elector-palatine; but before the latter could well feel his change of situation, he unexpectedly found that he had a rival of such superior power to encounter, that all competition on his side would be ridiculous. He had scarcely arrived in his new capital at Munich, when an Austrian army, which had been evidently stationed on the frontiers for the purpose, and only waiting for the moment of the Elector's death, poured on all sides into his territories, and left him no alternative but to resign the better half of his new possessions by compromise, or to risk the loss of the whole by a feeble opposition.



He therefore gave his involuntary assent to terms prescribed by violence and injustice. As such a flagrant attack could not fail of alarming all the princes of the empire, and of making an appeal to the sword inevitable, there is great reason to suppose that the Queen of France, actuated by the impulses of family pride, as well as of affection for her brother, the Emperor, exerted all her influence over the cabinet of Versailles, to involve the French nation in contentions with some other power, so as to prevent their opposing the schemes of aggrandizement projected by Joseph the Second. The King of Prussia having in vain used every effort to obtain restitution by amicable means, took the field early in the spring. The Emperor seemed equally resolute; and the preparations on both sides were so mighty, that had the fate of Europe depended on the contest, the force employed was not inadequate to the importance of the stake. Yet so equal was the distribution of strength, numbers, military skill, discipline, and courage between the two parties, that not one considerable action was brought on, though sharp skirmishes were frequent. A kind of languor, if not an actual desire of peace, was the consequence of such a struggle; and the courts of Versailles and Petersburg having exerted themselves to put an end to the dispute, an armistice took place in March, 1789, and a treaty was concluded on the 13th of May, by which the former convention between the Elector-palatine and the court of Vienna was annulled, and Bavaria ceded only the frontier territory appertaining to the regency of Burghausen, which Austria accepted as an equivalent for the formal renunciation of all her old claims.

Immediately on the first reading of the conciliatory bills in the House of Commons, rough drafts of them



were sent off to America by Lord North, in the expectation that such overtures from the mother country would, if they arrived in time, prevent congress from ratifying the new engagements entered into by their deputies at the court of France. These papers being circulated among the people by Sir William Howe, provoked the most contemptuous resolutions on the part of congress, who represented the bills as the sequel of an insidious plan formed by the British government for enslaving America. The object of them, they maintained, was to disunite the colonies, create divisions, and prevent foreign powers from interfering in their behalf. They called them an evidence of the weakness, or wickedness of the British government, or both; and finally resolved, that any man, or body of men, who should presume to make a separate agreement with the British commissioners, ought to be considered as open and avowed enemies; and that the United States neither could, nor would, hold any conference with such commissioners, unless they should, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of the United States. They also called upon the several provinces to use the most strenuous exertions, and to have their respective quotas of troops in the field as soon as possible, as, they said, it appeared to be the design of their enemies to lull them into a fatal security.

On the 2d of May, a few days after these resolutions of congress, Mr. Deane arrived from Paris with the French treaties, and a gazette was immediately published, which, besides a summary of the general information, exhibited some of the most flattering articles, with their own comments, extolling in the highest

strains of gratitude and admiration, the extraordinary equity, generosity, and honour of the French King; they seemed to count upon Spain as being already a virtual party to the alliance; and boasted of the favourable disposition of Europe in general towards America.

Such were the proceedings of congress previous to the arrival of the commissioners from England in the beginning of June. The persons united in this commission were the Earl of Carlisle, Mr. Eden, Governor Johnstone, and Sir Henry Clinton, who had lately taken the command of the army, in the room of Sir William Howe. Though the prospect was discouraging, they entered upon the execution of their office with alacrity; and dispatched a letter with the late acts of Parliament, a copy of their commission, and other papers, to the president of the congress, by the ordinary posts; their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, who was intended to convey them, and to act as an agent for conducting the negotiation with the congress upon the spot, being refused a passport. After deliberating for some days on the subject of these communications, the congress, through the medium of their president, returned for answer, that the acts of Parliament, the commission, and the commissioners' letter, supposed the people of the American states to be subjects of the King of Great Britain, and were founded on an idea of dependance which was utterly inadmissible; but they were ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, whenever the King of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose; the only proof of which would be an explicit acknowledgment of their independence, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies.



Before any farther advance towards an accommodation appeared hopeless, Mr. Johnstone, one of the commissioners, having served as a captain in the navy on the American coast, and afterwards been governor of a province there, in consequence of which he had formed an extensive acquaintance in that country, resolved to avail himself of so flattering an introduction, in hopes that it might facilitate the accomplishment of the great object in view. This seemed the more feasible, as his parliamentary conduct since that time had been in direct opposition to all those measures which were deemed hostile or oppressive with regard to the colonies, that it could scarcely fail of greatly increasing any influence which he might then have acquired. Under such circumstances he concluded that a private correspondence would operate more happily in smoothing or removing any difficulties that might arise, than the stiff, tedious, and formal proceedings of public negotiation; but he was soon mortified to find that his confidential letters to several persons of weight and character were laid before congress; that some passages in them were represented as attempts to corrupt the integrity of that assembly; and that he was even charged with employing agents to bribe some of the leading members; which they assigned as a reason for interdicting all intercourse with him, especially when, as they said, they were to negotiate upon affairs, in which the cause of liberty and virtue was interested. In his reply, he attributed the aspersions thrown on his character to the malice and treachery of the congress, who designed them only for the purpose of inflaming their constituents to endure all the calamities of war; but to disappoint their views in this respect, he declared, that he should for the future decline acting as



a commissioner, or taking the smallest share in any business, in which the congress should be concerned.

The efforts of the other commissioners proved equally fruitless. After a long controversy with some writers who defended the repulsive proceedings of the congress, and a variety of appeals to the people at large, they announced their intention to return to England, in a sort of farewell manifesto, which was published on the 3d of October, and in which they briefly recapitulated the different steps taken by them to accomplish the object of their commission, and the refusal of congress to listen to the most generous overtures: they reminded the colonies of their solemn appeals to heaven, in the beginning of the contest, that they took arms only for the redress of grievances; and asked, whether all their grievances, real or supposed, were not fully redressed in the present conciliatory offers: notwithstanding the obstructions they had met with, they were still ready to concur in all satisfactory and just arrangements for the re-establishment of peace; and to treat with deputies from all the states collectively, or with any provincial assembly or convention individually, at any time within the space of forty days from the date of their manifesto: they also proclaimed a general pardon to such as should, within the term limited, withdraw from their opposition to the British government; warning the people, at the same time, of the material change which would take place in the nature and conduct of the war, if they should still persevere in their obstinacy, more especially as that was founded on alliance with France. In a counter manifesto, which the congress issued almost a month after, they declared, that if their enemies presumed to execute their threats, they would take such exemplary vengeance as should

deter others from a like conduct. All hopes of terminating the troubles by negotiation being at an end, the commissioners took their final leave of America about the end of November, and returned to England with experimental proofs that nothing but superior force could subject the revolted colonies to the authority of the mother country.

From the war of words between the congress and the British commissioners, the transition was very rapid to a war of deeds and arms; but the plan of operations was now materially changed. Through the interference of a hostile maritime power, the command of the sea was about to be disputed by the contending parties; hence great circumspection became necessary in the choice of posts for the British army. As it was uncertain where the French might attempt to strike a blow, whether upon the continent of America, or in the West Indies, it was proper that the army should occupy a station, from which reinforcements might be most easily and expeditiously sent wherever they should be required. Philadelphia was very little adapted to such a purpose, being 100 miles distant from the sea, with which it communicated only by a winding river. For these reasons, and to guard against the danger of being opposed by a superior naval force in the Delaware, at a time when a junction was also expected between the troops under Gates and Washington, the Earl of Carlisle had taken out orders with him for the evacuation of Philadelphia, which was effected at three in the morning of the 18th of June, and so judicious was the admiral's arrangement, that the whole army, with its baggage, was passed over the Delaware, and encamped on the Jersey shore by ten in the forenoon, having met with little interruption from the enemy, though the Ame-



ricans entered Philadelphia before the British entirely left it. Most of the loyalists of that city went along with the army, but those who remained behind were treated with great severity: some were banished; several were thrown into prison; and two suffered death.

The march of the British army through the Jerseys was attended with difficulty. Encumbered with a vast train of baggage, extending the length of twelve miles, the whole country hostile, the bridges broken down, and a vigilant enemy pressing close behind, the utmost prudence and circumspection of General Clinton were necessary, to make a vigorous and effectual defence against those attacks to which a retreating army is so peculiarly exposed. Instead of proceeding in a direct route to Brunswick, the general determined, by bending his march to the right, and approaching the sea-coast, at once to disappoint the expectation of the enemy, and to avoid the difficulty attending the passage of the Rariton. On the evening of the 27th of June, the army encamped in the neighbourhood of Freehold Court-house in the county of Monmouth, and resumed their march early the next morning: scarcely, however, were they in motion when the enemy were discovered moving in force at some distance on both flanks. The first division under General Knyphausen proceeding with the escort of carriages to the heights of Middle-town, Sir Henry Clinton immediately formed the rest of his troops, with a view to bring on a general engagement. Lee advanced with the van of the American army to the attack, in conformity to the directions of General Washington; but several of the brigades under his command being thrown into confusion by an impetuous assault of the British cavalry, he order-



ed a retreat, with a view to form anew in an advantageous position behind a ravine and morass. In the interim Washington arrived at the head of the main body, and expressed in strong terms his astonishment at the retrograde motion of the van. Lee replied with equal warmth; but in the result, the troops of the van were ordered to form in front of the morass, where an obstinate engagement ensued, till the Americans being again worsted and broken, Lee was a second time under the necessity of ordering a retreat, which he conducted with skill and courage, himself being one of the last who remained on the field. The position taken by Washington with the main body, rendered it impossible to attack him in front with any prospect of success; and though his left flank was actually turned by a British detachment, Sir Henry Clinton, seeing no likelihood of any decisive advantage, recalled his brave troops, who were pressing on to the charge, notwithstanding the fatigue they had already undergone through the heat of the day, which was so intense that 59 soldiers dropped dead without a wound. The whole loss of the British army amounted to 358 men, including 20 officers, of whom Lieutenant-colonel Monckton was particularly lamented. In the very heat of the action, and during the confusion of a dangerous cannonade, his brave followers dug his grave with their bayonets, and threw in the earth with their hands. The loss of the Americans amounted to 361 men, including 32 officers. Sir Henry Clinton, having allowed his troops proper time for rest, resumed his march about midnight, joined General Knyphausen, and proceeded without farther molestation to Sandy Hook, where the fleet under Lord Howe had got round to receive them; and the army embarking on the 5th of July, landed the same day at New York.

Lée's haughty spirit could not brook the language which Washington had hastily used during the action, and he wrote him in consequence two passionate letters, which occasioned his being put under immediate arrest. A court martial being held upon him for disobedience of orders, misbehaviour in action, and disrespect to the commander in chief, he was found guilty, and suspended from all military command for twelve months.

Two days after the conveyance of the army, Lord Howe received intelligence by his cruisers, that Count D'Estaing, who had sailed from Toulon in April, was arrived on the coast of Virginia, and on the 11th of July, he appeared off Sandy Hook, with twelve sail of the line and three large frigates; to which Lord Howe could oppose only eleven ships of inferior magnitude and weight of metal, with some frigates and sloops. These being ranged with great skill in the harbour, the count, after remaining at anchor for eleven days, set sail to the southward as far as the mouth of the Delaware; and then changed his course for Rhode Island, in order to co-operate with General Sullivan in an enterprise against Newport. The approach of the French fleet to this harbour created the unpleasant necessity of burning the *Orpheus*, *Lark*, *Juno*, and *Cerberus* frigates, and of sinking the *Flora* and *Falcon*; but this was the only loss resulting from so formidable an invasion. The commander of the garrison, Sir Robert Pigot, made every preparation for a vigorous defence; and Lord Howe, to whom he had sent intelligence by a dispatch-boat, being reinforced by some ships from England, part of a squadron under Admiral Byron, immediately stood out to sea, and reached Rhode Island on the 9th of August. After much manœuvring for the weather-gage, the

adverse fleets were separated by a storm, which compelled the French admiral to proceed to Boston to refit. This circumstance obliged the American General Sullivan to raise the siege of Newport, which had been commenced under very favourable auspices.

The dispersion of the two fleets occasioned the accidental meeting of single ships, and produced various engagements, which terminated greatly to the honour of British valour and seamanship. In the evening of the 13th of August, Captain Dawson in the *Renown* of 50 guns fell in with the *Languedoc* of 84 guns, D'Estaing's own ship, which had lost her rudder and masts, and had the prospect of effecting so extraordinary a capture, when the appearance of several other ships of the squadron compelled him to desist: Commodore Hotham, in the *Preston* of 50 guns, fought the *Tonnant* of 80 the same evening with similar success: but the most brilliant of these contests occurred in the afternoon of the 16th, when the *Isis*, a ship also of 50 guns, commanded by Captain Raynor, was chased by the *Cæsar*, a French ship of 74 guns, in no way injured by the storm, and after a desperate conflict, which lasted for an hour and a half, the *Cæsar* sheered off. The *Isis* had sustained so much damage in her masts, sails, and rigging, that she was incapable of pursuing, but in other respects she had been very little injured; only one man was killed, and fifteen wounded: the French ship was so much damaged in her hull, that she was forced to bear away for Boston; and her killed and wounded amounted to fifty, including in the latter her captain, the celebrated Bougainville, whose arm was shot off in the action. Lord Howe followed his antagonist to Boston, in the hope of a favourable opportunity of attack; but found the French fleet lying in Nantasket



Road, so well defended by forts and batteries that he judged it impracticable, and returned to New York about the middle of September. During his absence six more ships of Admiral Byron's squadron had arrived at that port; and as the British naval force was now unquestionably superior to the fleet under D'Estaing, his lordship thought this a proper moment for availing himself of the leave he had before obtained to retire from the American station, on account of his health, and, resigning the command of the fleet to Admiral Gambier, took his departure for England.

On the first intelligence of the danger that threatened Rhode Island, Sir Henry Clinton embarked with 4000 men for its relief, but being detained for some days by contrary winds in his passage through the Sound, he returned to New York, whence he dispatched Major-general Grey, with the fleet of transports and troops, to exterminate some nests of privateers, which abounded in the rivers and creeks adjoining to Buzzard's Bay, in that part of New England called the Plymouth colony. In less than twenty-four hours they destroyed about seventy sail of shipping, with a great number of small craft, besides the magazines, wharfs, &c. on the Bedford and Fair Haven sides of the Acushinet river. To complete the success of their enterprise, they proceeded to the island called Martha's Vineyard, and there obtained a valuable contribution of 10,000 sheep and 300 oxen for the army at New York.

Another expedition was soon after set on foot against Egg harbour on the Jersey coast, where the enemy had many privateers and prizes, and a considerable number of ships, store-houses, and salt-works were destroyed. During a subsequent delay in Egg harbour, occasioned by contrary winds, a

French captain, with some private men, who had deserted from Pulaski's American legion, gave such an account of the careless manner in which three troops of horse and as many companies of infantry belonging to that corps were cantoned, as suggested to Captain Ferguson, the commander of the British detachment, the probability of surprising them. The success of the attempt was answerable to his expectation: the quarters of the enemy were surrounded in the night, and very few escaped. A few days before, a whole regiment of light horse, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Baylor, was surprised in the same manner, in the village of Old Taapan, by Major-general Grey, acting under the direction of Lord Cornwallis, and the greatest part of the Americans fell victims to the carnage incident to the confusion and uncertainty of a nightly attack. This unfortunate regiment had been detached by General Washington to harass the foraging parties of the British army on the banks of the North river; no farther attempt, however, was made to interrupt their operations.

An undertaking of greater importance was now determined upon by Sir Henry Clinton, who detached a considerable body of troops under Colonel Campbell, convoyed by Sir Hyde Parker, to attempt the recovery of the province of Georgia; General Prevost, governor of East Florida, having at the same time orders to co-operate with them. On the 23d of December, the armament arrived at the mouth of the Savannah; and on the 29th, Colonel Campbell attacked the American forces under Major-general Robert Howe, with the most signal success. The capital of Georgia immediately surrendered, and in less than a fortnight, the whole province was recovered,

with the exception of the town of Sunbury, which soon afterwards surrendered to General Prevost, who took the command of the British forces on his arrival at Savannah.

During these successes on the sea-coast, a desultory war was carried on in some of the interior and back settlements, between the Indians and the colonists, the latter too generally adopting the savage practices of the former. Mutual inroads were made, and waste and cruelty were inflicted and retorted with insatiable revenge. In the course of these barbarous hostilities, too shocking to admit of detail, the beautiful and flourishing new settlement of Wyoming, on the banks of the Susquehanna, fell a sacrifice to an incursion of Indians and American loyalists, headed by Colonel Butler; and the Indian settlements of Unadilla and Anaquago, upon the upper parts of the same river, which were also inhabited by white people attached to the royal cause, were in their turn ravaged and destroyed by the Americans. After a glance at such scenes of horror and disgust, the mind feels a sort of relief even in tracing the lamentable effects of civilized warfare.

The projects of Count d'Estaing being disconcerted in America, he set sail for the West Indies on the 3d of November, to second the operations of the Marquis de Bouillé, governor of Martinico, who had already captured the island of Dominique. On the same day that the French fleet left Boston, a detachment of 5000 troops, under convoy of Commodore Hotham, sailed from Sandy Hook, and arrived, without encountering the enemy, at Barbadoes, on the 10th of December. Without allowing the troops to disembark, an expedition was resolved upon against the island of St. Lucia, where on the 13th a landing



was effected. General Meadows and Admiral Barrington, upon whom the command had devolved, had carried several of the advanced posts, when D'Estaign arrived, with a superior force, in the hope of effecting the entire reduction of the British islands. On the morning of the 15th, he bore down with ten sail of the line, but met with so warm a reception, that he soon drew off. A renewed attack proved equally unsuccessful. At length he landed a body of 5000 troops, and putting himself at their head, marched to the assault of the British lines. Again repulsed with great loss, the count re-embarked his troops, and left the island, which soon after surrendered to the British arms. This conquest was considered as much more than an equivalent for the loss of what had been taken by the French, from whom the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon were also taken by some frigates dispatched from Newfoundland by Vice-admiral Montague.

Eight days after the departure of Count D'Estaign, Admiral Byron arrived with his fleet. All his proceedings had hitherto been marred by the opposition of the elements. In the voyage from England, whence he had been dispatched after the Toulon fleet, his ships were separated in a storm, and many of them reached New York in so shattered a state that they were not in readiness to proceed to sea till the 18th of October. He then went in quest of D'Estaign; but his ill fortune still pursued him. Scarcely had he reached the Bay of Boston, when, on the 1st of November, another storm so disabled his fleet, that he was obliged to put back to Rhode Island to refit, which afforded D'Estaign a favourable opportunity of proceeding to the West Indies. So sensible was the French admiral of the danger of encountering an

equality of British naval force, that for six months together he only ventured twice out of the Bay of Fort Royal, and both times hastily returned as soon as Byron's fleet was seen standing towards him. Squadrons were frequently sent to cruise off the mouth of the harbour where the count lay, and, if possible, to provoke him to come out and risk an engagement; but he could not be induced to deviate from his defensive plan.

Whilst the French were thus reduced, as it were, to a state of siege in the West Indies, they had nearly lost all their possessions in the East. When a rupture was seen to be inevitable, the English East India company transmitted their orders with so much promptitude, that the war broke out in the most distant extremities of the empire almost as soon as in the parts nearest to its centre. Chandernagore and all the factories belonging to the French in Bengal, at Yanaon and Karical, with their settlement at Massulipatam, were wrested from them during the summer; and, in October, the town and fortress of Pondicherry, the seat of the French government in India, with an immense train of artillery, and a garrison of 3000 men, 900 of whom were Europeans, after being invested for two months and ten days by an army under General Munro by land, and by a small naval force under Sir Edward Vernon, who had previously defeated a French squadron under M. de Fronjolly, was surrendered by capitulation. Thus, in less than four months, the French power in Bengal, and on the coast of Coromandel, was entirely annihilated.

From these scenes of remote hostility, it is now time to advert to the situation of affairs in Europe. After the delivery of the rescript announcing the



treaty between France and the revolted colonies, though war was not formally declared by Great Britain, the most assiduous preparations were made for it on both sides. At Brest the utmost vigour of naval equipment seemed to be exerted by the French, while the old device of threatening an invasion was again resorted to, and large bodies of troops were marched from the interior of the kingdom to the sea-coast bordering on the British channel. In England also no effort was spared; the militia were called out and embodied; and a British fleet of twenty ships of the line was cruising in the channel, before the grand fleet of France was in readiness to come out of Brest harbour.

Admiral Keppel, an officer of distinguished merit and reputation, having been fixed upon to command the channel fleet, sailed from St. Helen's on the 13th of June, with discretionary powers, as no blow had yet been struck by the enemy, which could bring upon them the direct charge of aggression. At the entrance of the Bay of Biscay, on the 17th, the admiral discovered two French frigates, the *Licorne* and the *Belle Poule*, very intent on taking a survey of his fleet, and on their refusal to obey the signal to bring-to, a chase ensued, when the *Licorne*, after discharging a broadside, struck to the *America*; the *Belle Poule*, after a warm engagement with the *Arethusa*, escaped by running on shore; and the *Pallas*, another French frigate, being discovered reconnoitering, was conducted into the fleet and detained. From the papers found on board these frigates, Admiral Keppel discovered that the French fleet in Brest amounted to thirty-two sail of the line; he therefore returned to port for a reinforcement. On the 9th of July he again sailed with twenty-four ships, and was soon



afterwards joined by six more. About this time the French fleet, commanded by Count D'Orvilliers, sailed from Brest; and letters of reprisal, grounded on the capture of the *Pallas* and *Licorne*, were issued by the court of France. The two fleets came in sight of each other in the afternoon of the 23d of July; and after manœuvring for four successive days, an engagement ensued on the morning of the 27th, which lasted about two hours, the fleets passing on contrary tacks, and in opposite directions. As soon as they had cleared each other, and the firing had ceased, the British admiral wore his ship to return upon the enemy, and threw out a signal for the rest of the fleet to form the line; but observing that some of his ships, disabled in the engagement, had fallen to leeward, and were in danger of being cut off by the enemy, he was in the first place obliged to take measures for their safety. By the manœuvres necessary for this purpose, and by the length of time required for repairing the damages sustained by the ships of the rear division under Sir Hugh Palliser, the day was so far spent before they could be again brought into their stations in the line, that nothing now remained but the expectation of the commander in chief, "that the French would fight it out handsomely next day." D'Orvilliers put on every appearance of intending to do so; but in the night he quitted his station, and steered for the coast of France, leaving three frigates with lights, to deceive the English admiral. In the morning the rearmost of his ships were scarcely discernible; and as their inferiority had been fully demonstrated, both in the action and by their flight, it was matter of sincere regret that the attack had not been renewed the preceding evening. A pursuit being deemed useless,

Admiral Keppel returned to Plymouth to refit, and then resuming his former station, kept the sea as long as the approaching winter would allow. The French fleet, being also refitted, ventured out of Brest; but instead of directing their course where they were sure of encountering an enemy, they made their way to the southward, where they were as certain of meeting none, and where their cruise could answer no other purpose than that of parade.

The engagement of the 27th of July, though not altogether "a proud day to England," impressed upon the French such a consciousness of their inequality to a renewal of the contest, that they avoided it by loitering about Cape Finisterre, and abandoning their own coasts and the bay to the British fleet; by which means the trade to England arrived in security from the different quarters of the world, whilst the French commerce became a prey to the English cruisers. But these advantages, however substantial, could not satisfy the public for the neglect of what they thought a favourable opportunity of terminating the war by a single blow. The failure of a complete victory was by some attributed to the commander in chief for not pushing his success, and by others to Sir Hugh Palliser for not obeying with all possible promptitude the signals of his superior officer, preparatory to a second attack. Some severe strictures on the vice-admiral's disregard of orders having appeared in the public prints, he wrote to Admiral Keppel, requiring from him an express contradiction of such foul aspersions. With this request the admiral refused to comply; upon which Sir Hugh Palliser published in one of the morning papers a statement of particulars relating to the action, with an introductory letter containing much implied censure on the commander in chief,

The latter immediately acquainted the first lord of the admiralty, that he could never sail, or act in conjunction with the vice-admiral of the blue, until matters were thoroughly explained by that officer. The dispute was inflamed by the indiscreet zeal of the partisans on both sides. It was taken up with great warmth in the House of Lords on the very first day of the session, (November the 25th,) and afterwards discussed in the House of Commons with still greater vehemence, both the admiral and vice-admiral being present, and taking a share in the debates, when the latter declared, that, finding he could not obtain justice by any personal application, and that no public motives could induce the admiral to bring forward any charge against him, which might afford an opportunity for the vindication of his character, he had been driven by necessity, (not having a right to demand a trial on himself) in order to repair the injury done to his honour, to lay several articles of accusation against Admiral Keppel, tending to show, as he would hereafter demonstrate, that the failure of success on the 27th of July was owing to the misconduct and fault of that commander.

A court martial being ordered by the lords of the admiralty, the trial commenced at Portsmouth on the 7th of January, 1779, and was not closed till the 11th of the next month. The result was very flattering to the commander in chief: he was not only acquitted, but the charges against him were declared to be malicious and ill-founded. The acquittal was celebrated in London for two nights successively with the usual testimonies of popular joy, but was also disgraced by the usual ebullitions of popular outrage. The iron gates and pallisades of the admiralty were but a weak fence against the fury of the mob; and



the houses of Sir Hugh Palliser, of Lord Sandwich, and of several others, were threatened to be demolished, until troops were brought forward to their protection. Admiral Keppel's friends were not less active to obtain for him some tribute of parliamentary applause, and the thanks of both Houses were voted to him for his conduct. Sir Hugh Palliser afterwards obtained a court martial on himself, and with due magnanimity resigned his place at the admiralty board, his lieutenant-generalship of marines, and his government of Scarborough Castle, besides vacating his seat in the House of Commons. The court martial, after sitting twenty-one days, acquitted him, but not without a slight censure. The want of temper and policy appears to have been his greatest crime. His signal bravery during the action on the 27th of July was acknowledged by his enemies; and if he was really blameable for a voluntary neglect of signals and contempt of orders after the action, the commander in chief cannot well escape some censure for not enforcing obedience, when he knew the honour and interest of his country to be at stake.

After the Christmas recess, Mr. Fox moved a vote of censure upon Lord Sandwich, "for sending Admiral Keppel, with twenty ships of the line only, to a station off the coast of France, thereby hazarding the safety of the kingdom, the Brest fleet consisting at that time of thirty-two ships of the line, besides a great superiority of frigates." The motion was negatived by a majority of only 204 against 170. Mr. Fox then moved, "that the state of the navy, at the breaking out of the present war, was inadequate to the exigencies of the service." In the course of the debate upon this motion, Lord Howe declared his resolution to decline all future service so long as the

present ministers continued in office. On this occasion, the previous question was moved, and carried, by 246 against 174.

Mr. Fox, after the Easter recess, made his promised motion for the dismissal of Lord Sandwich from his Majesty's presence and councils for ever. The insufficiency of Admiral Keppel's squadron, the coolness shown to that officer, and the duplicity of ministers towards him on every occasion, were unsparingly advanced, but no new fact or argument was adduced; and the motion was rejected by 221 against 118. A similar motion made in the House of Lords, by the Earl of Bristol, shared the same fate. Although the manner in which these and similar motions were repeated displayed more party zeal than real patriotism, they were supported in a manner which proved that the ministry was at this time far from popular.

At the opening of the budget, Lord North stated the deficiency in last year's taxes, the increase of the national expenditure, the difficulty he had experienced in negotiating a loan, and the distant prospect of a peace. The first evil, he said, arose from the operation of the servants' tax having been postponed, and from the underrating of the houses, and other errors in that plan of assessment. The increase of expenses could not be avoided, without relaxing our exertions when they ought to be most vigorous. The estimate of those expenses for the present year amounted to somewhat more than 15,000,000*l*. The provisions consisted of 2,700,000*l*. land and malt tax; 2,000,000*l*. sinking fund; 1,500,000*l*. exchequer bills; vote of credit for 1,000,000*l*.; about 1,200,000*l*. negotiable securities; and a new loan of 7,000,000*l*. to be raised by annuities in the three per cent. conso-

lidated funds, besides a farther annuity of 3*l*. 15*s*. per cent. to cease at the expiration of twenty-nine years, and a douceur of seven lottery tickets at 10*l*. each to every subscriber of 1000*l*. The interest of the new loan was to be paid by an additional duty of five per cent. on the full produce of the excise and customs, beer and ale, soap, candles, and hides excepted; by a tax of one penny per mile on every post horse; and by an additional duty of five per cent. on cambric. Though the terms of the loan were hard, the public would be relieved from the most oppressive part of the burden in twenty-nine years; and an open subscription was too hazardous an experiment in the midst of a war, when great sums were to be borrowed, and a great deal of unfunded debt was floating. As to the probable continuance of the war, his lordship said there appeared only three events which could render peace desirable. These were the return of America to her former state of obedience; the relinquishing her connexion with France; or France relaxing in her demands. The two former no man was at liberty to pronounce upon, and the latter there was little likelihood of at present. In such a state of affairs the prospect of peace was at a considerable distance; and though he did not doubt but money could be had in the usual manner, he thought it would not be unworthy that House and the nation at large to turn their thoughts to some mode of raising the supplies within the year, on account as well of the present as future advantages that must result, in a variety of instances, from the adoption of such a plan. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke exerted all their well-known powers, the one in exposing what he called the futility of Lord North's remarks, and the other in descanting on his



lordship's insolence; the committee, however, agreed to the proposed resolutions.

The ill success of the principal military operations in America having caused much public dissatisfaction, and blame having been imputed either to the commanders or the ministry as party feelings suggested, Sir William Howe brought the matter before Parliament, alleging that he had not the cordial confidence and support of ministry; that the orders they had sent him were never clear, but ambiguous, and such as might be easily explained away in case of any adverse accident; and that they had concealed the true state of affairs in America, promising success when they knew there was no reason to expect it. In reply to these charges, the exertions of the minister for the American department were recapitulated; and the letters of Sir William Howe proved that every plan proposed by him was sure to meet with the approbation of the minister; and that stronger testimonies of confidence in a general could not be given by those who employed him, than that he should be left at liberty to prosecute the war according to his own ideas: it was also shown from the same correspondence, that the minister's intelligence concerning the state of America was not materially different from what had been communicated to him by the general, nor his hopes of success more sanguine or more lively than the dispatches of the commander in chief warranted him to entertain. These answers not being thought satisfactory, the House of Commons, after long and warm debates, resolved itself into a committee of inquiry, on the 29th of April, and was occasionally employed for two months after in examining papers, and interrogating persons on the subject. The officers called upon for

examination were Lord Cornwallis, Major-general Grey, Sir Andrew Snape Hammond, Major Montresor, and Sir George Osborne, whose evidence went to establish the facts that the force sent to America was at no time equal to the subjugation of that continent; that the people of America were almost unanimous in their enmity and resistance to Great Britain; that the nature of the country was, beyond any other, difficult and impracticable for military operations; and that there was no fairer prospect of success, in any subsequent attempt at conquest, than in those which had been already made. On the other side Major-general Robertson, who had served twenty-four years in America, and Mr. Galloway, a member of the first congress, who had come over after General Howe's first successes, were examined and gave evidence contradictory to the opinions advanced by the officers above mentioned; the latter in particular was extremely severe in his censures of Sir William Howe, at whose request he was directed to attend again for cross examination; but on the day appointed, the general not being in the House, Mr. Whitworth moved an adjournment, and thus the committee expired without forming any resolution.

The spirit of toleration which distinguished the act of last session in favour of the Roman Catholics, was again exerted on behalf of the Protestant dissenting ministers and schoolmasters, a bill to relieve those people from some painful and absurd restrictions being carried with great facility. The grievances of Ireland did not, however, excite equally liberal feelings. She had suffered greatly from the American war, and an embargo on the exportation of provisions had nearly ruined that part of her trade, when various suggestions for her relief were discussed in Parlia-



ment; but owing to the opposition of several mercantile and manufacturing towns, very little was obtained. The merchants of Dublin and other places expressed their indignation at the illiberal opposition of self-interested people in Great Britain to the encouragement of their commerce, and resolved not to use any British goods which could be produced in Ireland, till a more enlightened and just policy should appear.

A short time before the prorogation, a royal message was delivered to Parliament, informing them, that a manifesto had been presented to his Majesty by the Count D'Almodovar, ambassador of the King of Spain, containing a declaration of hostility on the part of the Catholic King, who had in consequence ordered his ambassador to depart without taking leave. This event called forth much eloquence and invective from the opposition, who did not fail to remind ministers of the contempt with which they had treated every warning of danger, and of their repeated and triumphant declarations that Spain could have no interest in joining our enemies—that Spain had colonies of her own, and would not set so bad an example as to afford aid or succour to our rebellious colonies. An address, with the fullest assurances of support, was carried as usual.

An act for raising volunteer companies to strengthen the militia, and another to take away, for a limited time, the legal exemptions from being pressed to serve on board the navy, having been prepared for the royal assent on the 3d of July, his Majesty put an end to the session by returning his most cordial thanks to Parliament for their zeal in the support of so just and necessary a war, considering it as a happy omen to the success of his arms, that the increase of difficulties



served only to augment the courage and constancy of the nation.

The siege of Gibraltar, which speedily followed the hostile rescript from the court of Spain, pointed out the first and immediate object of her designs. The blockade on the land side commenced in the month of July, and the place was soon after invested by sea. It was fortunate for Great Britain, that the efforts of Spain should be directed, at this juncture, to so impracticable and ruinous an enterprise. France had opened the year with a successful expedition to the coast of Africa; the settlement of Senegal and the British forts on the river Gambia being captured in February by a squadron under the Duke de Lauzun; but Goree was soon afterwards seized and garrisoned by Sir Edward Hughes, who did not attempt the recovery of the other possessions, his destination being for the East Indies, where he had greater objects in view. On the 1st of May the French attacked the Isle of Jersey with 5 or 6000 men, in flat-bottomed boats, under convoy of three frigates and some smaller vessels, but were so warmly received, that, after a faint effort, they relinquished the enterprise. In a few days after, the frigates being seen on the opposite coast of Normandy, were pursued into Concalle Bay by a small squadron under Sir James Wallace in the *Experiment* of 50 guns, who taking upon himself the charge of his own ship, when the pilots refused to conduct her any farther, laid her a-breast of a battery that covered the runaways, and soon silenced it. Armed boats were immediately sent to board the French ships, which had been abandoned by their crews. A cutter of 16 guns was scuttled as she lay on the shore; two of the frigates were burnt;

and the third, *La Danaé* of 34 guns, with the smaller vessels, was towed off in triumph.

Admiral Arbuthnot, with a squadron of men of war, and a large fleet of merchantmen and transports, bound for New York, was proceeding down the channel, when he fell in with a vessel sent express from Jersey, with the first account of the danger of that island. He sailed directly with part of the squadron for its relief, ordering the rest to wait his return at Torbay; but finding, on his arrival off Guernsey, that the French had been repulsed, he rejoined his convoy. This deviation from his course, though short, was the cause of much subsequent delay, as the fleet was detained for near a month after by contrary winds. In the interval of its detention it was apprehended that the French would receive intelligence of its great value, and of the force that protected it; in consequence of which ten ships from the channel fleet were detached, under Admiral Darby, to accompany Arbuthnot to a certain latitude. The channel fleet, thus weakened, was obliged to suspend a plan for blocking up the harbour of Brest; and the French, availing themselves of the opportunity, hurried to sea with an imperfect equipment, and joined the fleet of Spain on the 24th of June. This junction was truly alarming: the two fleets, amounting to more than sixty sail of the line, with nearly an equal number of frigates and smaller vessels, steered for the British Channel, in the mouth of which Sir Charles Hardy, who had succeeded Keppel, was cruising with thirty-eight ships of the line, and some frigates. The combined fleets passed him about the middle of August, neither party observing the other, and appeared before Plymouth for two or three days, until a strong



easterly wind compelled them to retire. The same wind had also driven the British fleet to sea ; but, on the last day of August, Sir Charles Hardy entered the channel in full view of the enemy, who followed him as high as Plymouth : but as their crews were said to be sickly, their ships to be in bad condition, and the season for equinoctial gales was fast approaching, Count D'Orvilliers steered back to Brest, early in September, without effecting any thing farther than the capture of the Ardent man of war, which had accidentally fallen in with the combined fleets. The naval pride of England was certainly much mortified at these occurrences on her own coast, but the hopes of France and Spain, in fitting out so great an armament, must have been greatly disappointed.

The events in the West Indies, and on the banks of the Mississippi, proved more flattering to the views of the house of Bourbon, though not uncorrected by some severe strokes of disappointment and loss. The passiveness with which D'Estaign suffered himself to be blocked up in Fort Royal harbour has been already noticed. Both fleets were reinforced in the beginning of the year ; that of Admiral Byron by several ships of war from England, under Commodore Rowley ; and that of Count D'Estaign by a squadron from France, under M. de Grasse. The departure of Byron on the 6th of June, to convoy the trade of the West India Islands part of the way to England, afforded D'Estaign an opportunity of commencing operations. He detached 450 men to the island of St. Vincent, which, though garrisoned by seven companies of regular troops, surrendered without a shot. This was ascribed to the hostility of the Caribbs, who had never been perfectly reconciled to the English government. D'Estaign being again reinforced sail-



ed from Fort Royal with twenty-six ships of the line, eight frigates, and a number of transports having 9000 troops on board, and steered for Grenada, where he arrived the 2d of July. Lord Macartney, the governor, though his whole garrison did not exceed 150 regulars, with about the same number of militia, being strongly posted on an intrenched hill, repulsed the first assault of between 2 and 3000 of the French; but the superiority of numbers was at length decisive, and, after a hard conflict, the British lines were forced, when Macartney and his brave companions, rather than give a formal assent to dishonourable terms, surrendered at discretion. Admiral Byron, hearing of the capture of St. Vincent's, directed his course thither; but on his passage he received the still more unwelcome tidings of the attack on Grenada, the relief of which was therefore to be immediately attempted. Though his force consisted of only twenty-one ships of the line, and one frigate, besides transports, he was animated by the warmest hopes of success, being ignorant of D'Estaing's last reinforcement. On the 6th of July he came in view of the enemy; and a warm, but partial action ensued, in which three or four of the English ships sustained considerable damage, though their loss, in killed and wounded, bore a very small proportion to the dreadful slaughter on board the French fleet. In the sequel, Admiral Byron having, to his great mortification, seen the white flag flying on the fortress of St. George, withdrew to St. Christopher's, and D'Estaing returned to Grenada.

The balance of conquests was now greatly in favour of the French; and the superiority of their fleet spread a general panic among the inhabitants of the remaining British possessions in that quarter. It is, however,

probable, that the severe loss of men in the late conflict concurred with the approach of the hurricane season to restrain for the present any further attempts of D'Estaing on the West India Islands. After settling the government of his new acquisition, he proceeded to Cape François in Hispaniola, where he received letters from the French consul at Charlestown, and from the governor of Carolina, acquainting him with General Prevost's having lately threatened that city; explaining the critical situation of the adjoining provinces; and pointing out the advantages which might be expected from his co-operating with General Lincoln in the recovery of Georgia. He accordingly sailed for that province, and, unexpectedly arriving on that coast, captured the *Ariel* of 24 guns, then cruising off Charlestown bar, and the *Experiment* of 50 guns, which had been sent from New York with two store-ships under her convoy. On the 9th of September D'Estaing anchored off the mouth of the Savannah, and summoned General Prevost to surrender to the conquerors of Grenada. That officer obtained a truce for twenty-four hours, as if to deliberate on the message, but in reality to gain time. General Lincoln having joined D'Estaing, a regular siege commenced, which was sustained with great vigour by General Prevost, assisted by Captain Moncrieff, the chief engineer. The combined armies amounted to more than 10,000 men, and the whole force in Savannah did not exceed the fourth part of that number. Although the cannonade was incessantly kept up from the 4th till the 9th, few lives were lost, and the defences of the town were in no respect materially injured. The French commander, impatient at the resistance he had met with, now determined upon a general assault, and, after a des-



perate contest, the allies were routed on every side, leaving behind them, in killed and wounded, 637 French, and 264 Americans. In about a week after, Lincoln made a precipitate retreat to Carolina, and D'Estaing proceeded with the greater part of his fleet to France, sending the rest to the West Indies; but the latter having been dispersed in a storm, four of the frigates were intercepted on their way to Martinico.

The campaign in the other parts of America was spent by the British fleet and army in desultory operations and partial expeditions, the object of which seems to have been to distract the attention of the Americans by their multiplicity, and to weaken them by gradually cutting off their resources. Sir Henry Clinton was indeed unable, from the low state of the army, and the unfortunate delay of the reinforcements under Admiral Arbuthnot, to engage in any project of magnitude or importance. The same cause necessarily confined the sphere of naval enterprise, though the fleet had been since April, in consequence of Admiral Gambier's recall, under the command of Sir George Collier, an officer eminently distinguished for his zeal, activity, and success. His first attempt, in concert with General Matthew, was an expedition to the Chesapeake, and a descent upon Virginia, where they demolished Fort Nelson, the grand defence of the American dock-yard at Gosport, which they burnt, with all the timber it contained. A similar destruction was carried on at the town of Suffolk, at Kempe's Landing, Tanner's Creek, and other places in that quarter. The Americans themselves, on the approach of the invaders, set fire to a ship of war of 28 guns, belonging to congress, and ready for launching; and also to two French merchantmen in the river, with



their cargoes on board : eight other ships of war, upon the stocks, and several merchantmen, were burnt by the British troops ; and, exclusively of other losses, the number of vessels taken or destroyed during this expedition, amounted to 137. Immediately on the return of the forces from Virginia, they were joined by Sir Henry Clinton, with additional troops under General Vaughan, and proceeding up the North river, carried the two important posts of Stoney-point and Verplanks, which the Americans had diligently fortified to preserve the communication between the eastern and western colonies. Another expedition under Sir George Collier, Governor Tryon commanding the land forces, was projected nearly at the same time against Newhaven in Connecticut, where they took or destroyed the artillery, ammunition, and stores, with all the vessels in the harbour, but spared the town itself, with a degree of lenity which the conduct of the inhabitants scarcely deserved ; for the troops, after they had possession of the place, were fired at from the windows, and several of the centinels, though placed at private houses to prevent plunder, were wounded upon their posts. From Newhaven the fleet proceeded to Fairfield ; and as the forbearance at the former town had produced no good effect, the latter was laid in ashes, to give an example of severity. Norwalk and Greenfield shared the same fate. A descent at New London was also intended ; but being likely to make an obstinate resistance, Sir George Collier returned to Long Island to confer with the commander in chief on the subject, when a sudden blow, struck by the American General Wayne, called off their attention to a different quarter. This was the surprise of the fort at Stoney-point, which was taken by assault in the night of the

15th of July. The vigorous preparations of Sir Henry Clinton to regain this post induced the Americans to evacuate the fort, after destroying as many of the works as time would permit. They were soon repaired by the British troops, and a larger garrison than before was assigned for its defence. The very night that Brigadier Stirling recovered Stoney-point, a detachment of the Americans made a sudden attack on Paulus-hook, a strong post nearly opposite to New York on the Jersey side; but were compelled to retreat. The attention of Sir George Collier was next directed to the relief of a fortress lately constructed at the mouth of the river Penobscot, in the eastern confines of New England, which had been for some time closely invested by an armament from Boston. This was attacked lying in the river, by Sir George Collier, who took two frigates of 20 and 18 guns, and some provision vessels: the rest, including a new frigate of 32 guns, seven others from 24 to 16 guns, seven brigs, and twenty-four sail of transports, were all blown up. On Sir George Collier's return to New York, he found himself superseded by the arrival of Admiral Arbuthnot with the long expected reinforcements from England. Although it was now late, the season for action was not entirely over; but a rumour that D'Estaing intended to attack New York, compelled Sir Henry Clinton to give up all thoughts of offensive operations during the remainder of the campaign, and even to withdraw the garrison from Rhode Island for the purpose of concentrating his force. In this respect alone, by obliging Sir Henry to act upon the defensive, was D'Estaing's visit serviceable to the American cause.

In the interior the war of devastation was still carried on between the provincials and Indians. Against



the latter an expedition of magnitude was planned by congress, and the conduct of it was given to General Sullivan at the head of 5000 men, with a suitable train of artillery. The Indians, after one very obstinate and bloody conflict on the 29th of August, being convinced of their inability to resist such a force, abandoned their settlements; and the barbarous savage had the mortification to find that the civilized inhabitant of the sea-coast could rival him in deliberate acts of mischief. Eighteen of their towns were laid in ashes, 150,000 bushels of corn were destroyed, their gardens were laid waste, and nothing was suffered to remain that could be supposed to afford them sustenance. Whilst this terrible chastisement was inflicted on the Indians northward of Pennsylvania and New York, similar expeditions from the southern colonies were conducted upon the same principles.

As Spain had so carefully preserved the appearances of friendship till her preparations for war were fully completed, it was not a matter of surprise to see her commence hostilities in remote parts of the globe, with all the advantages of early information, and previous design. About the middle of August, Don Galvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana, having collected the whole force of his province at New Orleans, set out upon an expedition against the British settlements on the Mississippi; and as they had no cover but a newly constructed fort, defended by 500 men, they could not long resist the efforts of a well-provided army of four times that number. Don Galvez, extending his views to the conquest of all West Florida, concerted a plan of operation with the governor of the Havannah, in pursuance of which he was to be assisted by a considerable embarkation from that place early in the ensuing year.



With equal eagerness, the Spanish governor of Honduras attacked the British logwood cutters; took many of them prisoners; and expelled the rest from their principal settlement at St. George's Key. Captain Dalrymple, with a force from Jamaica, and some Indians and volunteers collected on the Mosquito shore, being on his passage to Honduras for the purpose of assisting the bay-men, fell in with a small squadron of frigates under Commodore Luttrell, who had been cruising to intercept two Spanish register ships. The commodore informed Captain Dalrymple, that the Spaniards were already dispossessed of St. George's Key; and that the register ships, having taken shelter in the harbour of Fort Omoa, the key to the whole settlement of Honduras, were so strongly protected as to bid defiance to any effort by sea. Under such circumstances, the two commanders agreed to make a joint attack on Omoa by sea and land, which was crowned with the most brilliant success. The walls were scaled by the intrepid assailants, on the 16th of October, and the keys of the fort were surrendered to Captain Dalrymple, with 355 prisoners. The value of the prizes was estimated at 3,000,000 of dollars. No part of this loss was more severely felt by the Spaniards than that of 250 quintals of quicksilver, a commodity so essential to the purification of their gold and silver ores, that they would have given almost any price for it: but the captors, preferring the public good to their own emolument, would not part upon any terms with an article of such consequence to the enemy, though of no great value to themselves. A small garrison was left in the castle, which was afterwards so much diminished by the unhealthiness of the climate, that the place was recovered by the Spaniards.

Some changes in the ministry took place in November. Lord Stormont, late ambassador at Paris, was made secretary of state in the room of Lord Suffolk, deceased: the Earl of Weymouth a second time resigned the seals of the southern department, which were transferred to the Earl of Hillsborough: Lord Gower having quitted the president's chair, it was filled by Lord Bathurst; and the old place of first lord of trade and plantations, which had been absorbed and included in the new office of secretary of state for the colonies, was now separated and bestowed on the Earl of Carlisle. The secretaryship at war had, some months before, been given to Mr. Jenkinson, who had displayed a considerable share of talent.

The success at Omoa, and some other favourable occurrences abroad, were not known in England at the meeting of Parliament on the 25th of November, but the disappointment of the French and Spanish confederacy in their schemes of invasion was a subject of triumph in the speech from the throne; and though they still threatened Great Britain with armaments and preparations, the King declared his persuasion, that, knowing the character of his brave people, the menaces of their enemies, and the approach of danger, had no other effect on their minds, but to call forth that national spirit which had so often defeated the projects of ambition and injustice: the state of Ireland was recommended to the consideration of Parliament: the good conduct of the militia was acknowledged: and his Majesty returned his cordial thanks to all ranks of loyal subjects who had stood forth in this arduous conjuncture, assuring them that he was firmly resolved to prosecute the war with vigour, and to make every exertion, in order to compel the enemy to listen to equitable terms of

peace. The usual motion for an address in answer to the speech from the throne, called forth an amendment from the Marquis of Rockingham, censuring, in strong language, the facility with which the two ambassadors, Lord Grantham and Lord Stormont, had suffered themselves to be deceived by the craft of Spain and France; and the confidence with which ministers had assured Parliament that treaties inimical to the interests of Great Britain were not in existence, or even in embryo; also beseeching his Majesty to reflect upon the extent of territory, power, and opulence, of reputation abroad and concord at home, which distinguished the opening of his Majesty's reign, and marked it as the most splendid and happy period in the history of this nation; and to turn his eyes on the present endangered, impoverished, distracted, and even dismembered, state of the empire, after all the grants of successive parliaments, liberal even to profusion, and trusting to the very utmost extent of rational confidence;—and finally stating to his Majesty, that if any thing could prevent the consummation of public ruin, it can be only new counsels and new counsellors,—a real change from the conviction of past errors,—and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless. Lord Stormont, in reply, imputed a great part of the public misfortunes to the incautious and too often violent language held in Parliament. Lord Mansfield declared himself persuaded that nothing but a full and comprehensive union of all parties and all men could effect the salvation of the country. He was old enough to have seen violent party struggles; but no previous time presented an image of the present. How far the temper of the nation and the state of parties might admit of a coalition, he could not decide; but the



event was devoutly to be wished. The amendment was negatived by 82 against 41 voices. A similar amendment, moved in the House of Commons, by Lord John Cavendish, was, after a most acrimonious and stormy debate, negatived by 233 against 134. Lord North admitted that it was the duty of Parliament to cause bad ministers to be removed; but he insisted that proof should first be made of their delinquency. The disapprobation of that House must and ought to sweep ministers before it; and whenever his day of account should come, he declared himself ready to meet it without fear.

On the 6th of December, a resolution of censure on the ministers was moved in the House of Commons by the Earl of Upper Ossory, relative to the affairs of Ireland. This motion was supported by Mr. Dunning, a lawyer and speaker of great eminence, and by Mr. Burke, who drew a parallel between the situation of Ireland and that of America. Lord North, who opposed the motion, declared his intention to bring forward certain resolutions respecting Ireland in a few days, which he trusted would meet the ideas of gentlemen on both sides of the House. The motion was then negatived by 173 against 100; and a similar motion, in the Peers, by the Earl of Shelburne, was negatived by 82 against 37. Lord North, agreeably to his intimation, brought forward his propositions respecting Ireland, comprising several important concessions, particularly that Ireland should be allowed the free exportation of her woollens. These resolutions passed unanimously, and were received in Ireland with the warmest testimonies of joy and gratitude.

The army and navy estimates, which had been submitted to Parliament before the Christmas recess,

while they served to show the vigour of the preparations for the ensuing campaign, could scarcely fail of exciting, at the same time, some alarm at the magnitude of the contest, and the prodigious expense with which it was attended. The aggregate of the forces deemed necessary for the prosecution of the war fell little short of 270,000 men, besides the troops upon the Irish and Indian establishments; and in order to provide for their maintenance, and for the other exigencies of the state, 12,000,000*l.* were required to be raised by loan, in addition to the permanent means of supply. So considerable an increase of the national debt excited much opposition; ministers were accused of prodigality and waste of the public money; and economy became the order of the day. Early in 1780 public meetings were convened in various places, and petitions were presented to Parliament, praying for a correction of abuses in the public expenditure. The appointment of a select committee to examine the public accounts was moved for by Colonel Barré in the Lower, and the Earl of Shelburne in the Upper House; and Lord North, influenced by these proceedings, brought in a bill for instituting a commission of accounts, consisting of independent gentlemen, not members of either House, which was carried by a great majority; and their successive reports display much accuracy, ability, and impartiality. About the same time Mr. Burke brought forward a plan for the reduction of the national expenditure, and the diminution of the influence of the crown, to effect which purposes he moved for leave to bring in certain bills for the better regulation of his Majesty's civil establishments, for the sale of forest and other crown lands, for more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality of Wales, the counties



palatine of Chester and Lancaster, and the dutchy of Cornwall. The necessary minuteness of detail, the multiplicity of local circumstances, and personal considerations, on which the whole plan was founded, were embellished by Mr. Burke's genius and fancy with all the charms of eloquence ; but the bills, after many violent conflicts, in the course of which the minister was more than once left in a minority, were finally lost.

In one of these debates, which had for its object the abolition of the board of trade, an extraordinary dispute took place between Sir Fletcher Norton and Lord North. Mr. Fox having called upon the speaker for his opinion on the competency of Parliament to control the civil list expenditure, the latter took occasion to declare that the noble lord at the head of affairs and he were not friends, at which the minister expressed no small degree of surprise ; Sir Fletcher then stated, that he had been induced to quit the bar, and to accept of his present situation, by an engagement on the part of the Duke of Grafton, at that time minister, that, whenever an opportunity offered, he should be provided for in the line of his profession, as a pledge of which, and by way of equivalent for the advantages he had given up, he now held the sinecure office of lord chief justice in Eyre. But, notwithstanding this compact, he had lately discovered, that a negotiation was in train between the noble minister then present, and the chief judge of one of the courts, by which the latter was to retire on a pension for the purpose of appointing another to supply his place, to the utter subversion of his own claim. Lord North said, he did not question the account given by the right honourable gentleman, but he neither knew of the transaction at the time, nor looked upon himself as



responsible for any promise which might have been made by his predecessors in office. The fact was, that Sir William de Grey, then lord chief justice of the Common Pleas, had intimated his intention to resign, and Mr. Wedderburne was fixed upon for his successor; on which occasion the title of Lord Loughborough was also conferred upon him. Mr. Wallace succeeded to the office of attorney-general, and Mr. Mansfield was appointed solicitor-general.

Another of those personal bickerings arose, a few days after, out of the following circumstances. Mr. Fullarton, late secretary to the embassy at Paris, had, upon his return to England, offered to raise a regiment, the command of which was given him as a return for his exertions. This appointment, however, had been contemptuously mentioned in a late debate by the Earl of Shelburne, who said, that a *clerk* ought not to be trusted with a regiment, and that he and his regiment would be as ready to draw their swords against the liberties of their country as against its foes. These aspersions were strongly resented by Mr. Fullarton, who introduced the subject in the House of Commons, when a warm altercation ensued. Lord North, after complimenting him on the spirit with which he felt and resented the injury, advised him to treat all personal attacks with indifference; he, however, sought other means of redress. Lord Shelburne gave him a meeting in Hyde Park, and being wounded, though not dangerously, by Mr. Fullarton's second shot, fired his own remaining pistol in the air, upon which the matter terminated.

The loan of 12,000,000*l.* before mentioned was to be funded in the four per cents., and the interest to be raised chiefly by an increase of some old taxes, prin-

cipally that on malt; but it was only to affect private breweries, an adequate allowance being made to the public brewer. The opposition made to this tax was very feeble, there being only 9 who refused to support the measure, "until the county petitions were first complied with," against 135, who voted for it. On bringing up the report, Mr. Hartley and some others asserted, "that, by agreeing to the report previously to remedying the grievances of the nation, the matter would be reduced to this alternative,—if the Parliament got the better of the people, this would become an absolute monarchy: if the people got the better of the Parliament, the King would be dethroned." This opinion was countenanced by 37 members out of 182 then present.

On the 6th of April the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee, on the motion of Mr. Dunning, to take the petitions of the people into consideration, on which occasion a very remarkable debate occurred. The honourable mover submitted two propositions, which, should the House concur in them, he meant to follow up with real, substantial, and practicable measures; but, should they dissent from them, or endeavour to evade or procrastinate, there would be at once an end of the petitions and a full answer to the petitioners. His first motion was, that it should be resolved by this House, "that the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." This motion was warmly supported by the speaker of the House, who declared, that on an occasion like the present, he should deem himself criminal in remaining silent; the resolution proposed contained an allegation which was too notorious to require proof—which, in its full extent, did not admit of proof—it could be known only to the members of

that House. As they were the only persons competent to resolve it, they were bound as jurors by the conviction arising in their own minds, and were obliged to determine accordingly. The powers constitutionally vested in the executive part of the government, were, he said, amply sufficient for all the purposes of good government, but its undue influence had increased to a degree absolutely incompatible with every just idea of a limited monarchy. What the petitioners demanded should have originated within those walls; they were sitting as the representatives of the people, solely for their advantage and benefit, and were pledged to them for the faithful discharge of their trust. The lord-advocate of Scotland, Henry Dundas, proposed such an amendment as he thought would be rejected by opposition, and, consequently, that the whole would fall to the ground. The amendment, however, which consisted in inserting the words, "that it is now necessary to declare," was readily and unexpectedly agreed to by the opposite party; and on a division the numbers were, in favour of the motion 233, against it 215; so that ministers were left in a minority of 18. Mr. Dunning then moved, "that it was competent to that House to examine into and to correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil list, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the House to do so." This motion was also carried. It was then moved, by Mr. Thomas Pitt, "that it was the duty of that House to provide, as far as might be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to the House from the different counties, cities, and towns, in this kingdom." Lord North most earnestly implored the committee, as he had done on the former motion, to



desist, but the resolution was agreed to. Mr. Fox then moved, "that the resolutions should be immediately reported to the House." This was protested against as violent, arbitrary, and contrary to the established usage of Parliament. The motion, however, was carried; and the chairman reporting the resolutions accordingly, they were severally agreed to by the House. Four days afterwards, the committee being resumed, Mr. Dunning moved "that there be laid before the House every session, within seven days after the meeting of Parliament, an account of all monies paid out of the civil list revenue to, or for the use of, or in trust for, any member of Parliament since the last recess." This, though objected to by ministers, was carried without a division. Mr. Dunning next moved, "that the persons holding the offices of treasurer of the chamber, treasurer of the household, cofferer of the household, comptroller of the household, master of the household, clerks of the green cloth, and their deputies, should be rendered incapable of a seat in that House." This also was opposed; but, on a division, it was carried by 215 against 213. So far the opposition had triumphantly proceeded, when the sudden illness of the speaker obliged the House to adjourn to the 24th of April. The committee being then resumed, Mr. Dunning moved for an address, "that his Majesty would be pleased not to dissolve the Parliament or prorogue the present session until the objects of the petitions were answered." This motion, to the astonishment and chagrin of the opposition, was rejected by 254 against 203. It was evident, that, during the recess, a sudden change had taken place in the temper and disposition of the House. Mr. Fox, after the division, severely reprobated the conduct of those men who had thus receded from the solemn

engagements which they had so recently entered into; and Mr. Dunning charged them with direct treachery to the nation, considering this resolution as an effectual bar to all future means and efforts of redress. On a subsequent resumption of the subject, he moved, "that the two resolutions passed on the 10th of April be reported." A motion, however, from the opposite side of the House, "that the chairman leave the chair," which amounted to a dissolution of the committee, was carried by 177 to 134. Thus ended those memorable deliberations.

During the session of 1778, an act had been passed relieving the Roman Catholics from some of the heavier penalties inflicted upon them in the last century. This measure was much approved in England; but in Scotland it excited great indignation, and dangerous popular commotions. Violent tumults took place at Edinburgh and Glasgow; the Popish chapel in the metropolis was destroyed; the houses of the principal Catholics were attacked and plundered; and the fanatics formed themselves into a society, termed the "Protestant Association," to oppose any remission of the laws against the Papists. Of this association, Lord George Gordon, a man in the highest degree wild, eccentric, and enthusiastical, was chosen president. This association gradually extended to England; much pains were taken to prejudice the minds of the vulgar against the relaxation of the penal code; and it was at length determined to prepare a petition for a repeal of the law alluded to, which is affirmed to have obtained 120,000 signatures, chiefly of men of the lowest orders of society. Lord George Gordon, who was a member of the House of Commons, declined to present this petition, unless he were accompanied to the House by



at least 20,000 men. A meeting of the association was consequently convened in St. George's Fields, on the 2d of June, whence it was supposed that not less than 50,000 persons proceeded in regular divisions, with Lord George Gordon at their head, to the House of Commons, where his lordship presented their petition. Towards evening this multitude began to grow very tumultuous, and grossly insulted several members of both Houses, compelling them, in passing to and from the House, to cry, No Popery! and to wear blue cockades. During the debates on the petition, Lord George Gordon frequently addressed the mob without, in terms calculated to inflame their passions, stating to them, "that the people of Scotland had no redress till they pulled down the Popish chapels." After the adjournment of the House, the mob, agreeably to this suggestion, proceeded to demolish the chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors. The military were ordered out; and though they were unable to prevent the mischief, they apprehended several of the rioters. The following day, Saturday, passed quietly; but on Sunday the rioters re-assembled in vast numbers, and destroyed the chapels and private dwellings belonging to the principal Catholics in the vicinity of Moorfields. On Monday they extended their devastations to other parts of the town; and the house of Sir George Saville, in Leicester Fields, was totally demolished, Sir George having been the proposer of the obnoxious bill. They also destroyed a Catholic chapel, in Virginia Street, Ratcliff Highway, and a valuable library belonging to the priests. On Tuesday, the day for taking the petition into consideration, the mob again surrounded the Parliament House, repeating their outrages and insults. After passing some resolutions



adapted to the occasion, and expressive of their indignation, the House adjourned. In the evening, the populace attacked the prison of Newgate, where their comrades were confined, and, setting the building in flames, liberated upwards of 300 felons and debtors. They next proceeded to Lord Mansfield's house, in Bloomsbury Square, which they totally demolished, with the paintings, library, manuscripts, and furniture, his lordship himself escaping with some difficulty. The prisons of Clerkenwell were also forced, many private houses were plundered or destroyed, and scarcely did the night afford any cessation of the riots. On Wednesday, the mob, more desperate than ever, attacked with incredible fury the houses of various individuals, chiefly Catholics, which they had previously marked for destruction. In the evening the King's Bench, the Fleet Prison, the New Compter, the toll-gates on Blackfriars' Bridge, and Langdale's large distillery in Holborn, were set on fire; and, with a prodigious number of private dwellings in different parts of the town burning at the same time, formed a tremendous scene of conflagration. Attempts were also made on the Bank and Pay Office; but these, being strongly guarded, fortunately escaped destruction. At this time, the public indignation was much excited by the supineness of the magistracy of London; and at length a privy council was convened, at which several members of the opposition attended, and the King himself declared, that, although the magistrates had not done their duty, he would not be deficient in his. General orders were then immediately transmitted to the military to fire upon the rioters, without waiting for directions from the civil magistrate; in consequence of which, by noon, on Thursday, order and tranquillity were perfectly restor-

ed, though at the expense of many of the rioters' lives. Next evening, Lord George Gordon was taken into custody, and, after a strict examination before the privy council, committed close prisoner to the Tower on a charge of high treason, which not being fully established at his trial, he was acquitted. An impeachment of the House of Commons for high crimes and misdemeanors would have been a more effectual mode of procedure, and would have ensured that punishment, which his audacious and inflammatory conduct so justly deserved. A great number of the rioters having been also apprehended, a special commission was issued for trying them, and many suffered death. But neither the sword of public justice, nor the more destructive fire of the military, proved so fatal to the great body of the delinquents, as their own inordinate appetites. Several hundreds fell the victims of inebriation, especially at Langdale's distillery; while others in search of plunder were suddenly buried in the ruins of demolished houses.

On the very day that the riots commenced, the Duke of Richmond gave notice of his design to bring in a bill for annual parliaments, and a more equal representation of the people in the House of Commons. His grace declared the national representation to be flagrantly and grossly corrupt. The constitution, he said, had been impaired, and was impairing daily, by the accumulation of abuses: Parliament was becoming more and more servile: and the tendency of the prevailing system was, to make the will of the sovereign the rule and measure of the government. He even proceeded to assert, that the present Parliament was in reality no parliament at all, because it was not founded on that principle which could alone constitute them the legitimate representatives of the people. The



most effectual remedy for the existing evils would be to shorten the duration of parliaments, rendering them annual; and to cause every man in the kingdom, of full age and not disqualified by law, to be represented in the House of Commons. At this very time, the House was prevented from listening by the outrages of the lawless multitude without, who, according to the principles of the proposed bill, were henceforth to be invested with the power of returning representatives to Parliament: the populace were on the point of rushing into the House, opposed only by the activity and resolution of the door-keepers and attendants. Several peers were grossly insulted, and, on entering, exhibited proofs of the indignities which they had sustained; and the House at length adjourned in the utmost confusion.

The members of the House of Commons began to assemble early on the 8th of June; but upon the speaker's pointing out to those present the impossibility of exercising their legislative functions, while the city of Westminster was under martial law, they adjourned to the 19th, as the Lords had done two days before. The meeting of both Houses, after this forced recess, was opened by his Majesty, who lamented the necessity which had obliged him, by every tie of duty and affection to his people, to employ the force intrusted to him for the suppression of those acts of felony and treason, which had overborne all civil authority, and threatened the immediate subversion of all legal power, the destruction of all property, and the confusion of every order in the state; he at the same time renewed his assurances, that he had no other object than to make the laws of the realm, and the principles of the constitution, the rule and measure of his conduct. Addresses of thanks for this speech



were voted without a single negative. Next day, it was determined in a committee of the whole House of Commons, that no repeal of the act in favour of the Roman Catholics should take place, as the grievances said to arise from it were imaginary: but several resolutions were agreed to, tending to set the conduct of Parliament in a fair light, and to undeceive the ill-informed, yet well-meaning, part of the petitioners against that act. A bill was also carried through the Lower House, to restrain Papists from taking upon them the education of Protestant children; but many of the lords thinking it derogatory from their dignity and independence to have any bill forced upon them by popular outrage, or passed through a weak compliance with absurd prejudices, the bill was got rid of by a motion on the 4th of July, to put off the third reading till that day week. This amounted to a total rejection, as Parliament was prorogued on the 8th.

Government eventually derived an accession of strength from those riots which aimed at little less than its subversion; for they so strongly impressed the minds of the public with the danger arising from popular assemblies for political purposes, that the associations for reform were deserted by many who had at first encouraged them. Amongst other circumstances that also concurred to allay the discontents which had for some time existed, the chief articles of subsistence had fallen to nearly half the price which they bore at the beginning of the war. Wheat, which sold for 15*l.* per load in the year 1775, now fell to 7*l.* 10*s.*: barley, oats, and peas were reduced in nearly the same proportion; and hay was still more abundant, having fallen from 4*l.* 10*s.* to 40*s.* per load, which had a material influence on the prices of cattle.

The year opened with new accessions of glory to the naval renown of England: Sir George Rodney, having under his command a reinforcement of ships for the West Indies, and a part of the channel fleet with provisions and stores for the garrison of Gibraltar, had only been a few days at sea, when, on the 8th of January, he fell in with a convoy of sixteen merchantmen bound to Cadiz, under protection of a 64 gun ship, four frigates, and two smaller vessels, to which he immediately gave chase; and, in a few hours, the whole were taken. Prince William Henry, afterwards Duke of Clarence, the King's third son, embarked with Sir George. About a week after this exploit, he descried, off Cape St. Vincent, a Spanish squadron of eleven ships of the line and two frigates, which he directly bore down upon, taking the lee-gage, in order to prevent them from retreating into their own ports. The action began, in the midst of a very rough gale, at four in the afternoon; and, in little more than half an hour, one of the Spanish ships blew up, and all on board perished. The engagement continued till two in the morning, when the *Phoenix* of 80 guns, Admiral Langara's own ship, and three of 70 guns each, were taken and secured: two more of 70 guns had also struck; but, through the violence of the tempest, were afterwards driven on shore and lost. The rest of the squadron escaped in a shattered condition. Sir George Rodney's force was certainly much superior; yet his consummate skill and courage were not the less eminently displayed in the attack, which the violence of the storm, the darkness of the night, and the vicinity of a lee-shore, rendered extremely dangerous. As soon as Sir George saw the supplies safely landed at Gibraltar, he proceeded to the West Indies, sending home his prizes



with the detachment of the channel fleet under Admiral Darby, who, on his passage, captured the *Prothée*, a French ship of 64 guns, and three vessels laden with military stores, being part of a convoy bound to the Mauritius, in the East Indies.

Though the reinforcement under Admiral Rodney, after his arrival at St. Lucia on the 27th of March, still left the British fleet somewhat inferior to that of the French at Martinique, yet he soon returned a late menacing visit from the Count de Guichen, and remained two days off Fort Royal harbour, endeavouring to provoke the enemy to an engagement. He then left some swift-sailing vessels to watch their motions, and returned with the rest of his fleet to St. Lucia. In about a fortnight, Rodney received intelligence that the French fleet, consisting of twenty-three sail of the line and a number of frigates, had put to sea in the night of the 15th of April; and, although he had three ships less, he used such exertions in pursuit of the enemy, as to come up with them in the morning of the 17th. At noon he made the signal for a general and close engagement, setting himself a noble example to all his officers, by beating three of the enemy's ships successively out of the line, and then bearing down upon the French admiral, whom, though assisted by two seconds, he fought for an hour and a half with unremitting fury, till the enemy bore away, whereby their line of battle was entirely broken in the centre. The great distance of the British van and rear, with the crippled state of some of Rodney's division, and particularly of his own ship, after having singly sustained such a conflict, rendered it impossible to make the victory complete by an immediate chase. His subsequent exertions to bring the enemy to an action were constantly eluded



by the Count de Guichen, who first took shelter at Guadaloupe, and afterwards regained his former place of security at Fort Royal, though not without receiving some severe blows in a few partial rencounters. The arrival of a Spanish squadron of twelve ships of the line, besides frigates and transports with above 10,000 troops on board, seemed to give the count an invincible superiority, and to portend ruin to the British possessions, as well as to the British navy, in those seas, but the storm blew over without a single explosion. A pestilential distemper broke out among the Spanish troops, and the allied fleets, after remaining inactive for several weeks in the bay of Fort Royal, put to sea in the night of the 5th of July, directing their course to St. Domingo, whence Don Solano proceeded with the Spanish fleet to the Havannah, and the Count de Guichen put into Cape François, where he remained till the homeward bound trade from the French islands had assembled, when, taking it under his protection, he sailed directly for Europe. Sir George Rodney, thinking that the count only meant to convoy the trade to a certain latitude, and then proceed to the continent of America, sailed thither himself with eleven ships of the line and four frigates, to be in readiness to thwart the designs of his old enemy in every quarter. Although he found, soon after his arrival at New York, in September, that this effort of his zeal for the public service might have been dispensed with, yet, in the end, he had no cause to regret the trouble which he had taken, as it proved the means of saving the squadron under his immediate command from one of the most dreadful hurricanes that had ever swept the seas or desolated the islands in the West Indies.

The successes of the British forces on the continent,

and coast of America, during the whole of this campaign, were clouded with few misfortunes. Sir Henry Clinton, who had sailed from New York just before the close of the preceding year, with the greater part of the army, under convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot, landed on John's Island, within thirty miles of Charlestown, about the middle of February. But the natural and artificial obstructions to the farther progress of the forces both by sea and land were so great, that the troops did not reach Charlestown Neck till the 29th of March. The frigates and some of the larger ships, which were lightened of their guns, crossed the bar on the 20th of March, and, on the 9th of April, effected their passage into the harbour, under a severe and impetuous fire from the batteries on Sullivan's Island. A joint summons was now sent to General Lincoln, who commanded in Charlestown, to surrender; but he replied, that duty and inclination prompted him to defend it to the last extremity. As soon, however, as the second parallel of the besiegers was complete, he offered to capitulate, but on conditions which were deemed inadmissible. In a few days, the third parallel being advanced within 150 yards of his lines, and preparations being made for a general assault, he consented to deliver up the city on the terms originally proposed by the British commanders. Between 6000 and 7000 men, consisting of regular troops, militia, and sailors, became prisoners of war, and were allowed some of its honours; but in marching out to deposit their arms, the drums were not to beat a British march, nor the colours to be uncased. Near 400 pieces of ordnance, with a considerable quantity of stores, fell into the hands of the victors. Three American and one French frigate, a polacre of 16

guns, and some smaller vessels, were also taken. The naval capture would have been more considerable, had not the Americans, on seeing the bar crossed by the British squadron, sunk a 60 gun ship, three frigates, a brig, and several merchantmen, to obstruct the channel of the river. General Leslie took possession of the town on the 12th of May; and the commander in chief immediately set on foot several expeditions, well calculated to extinguish every idea of resistance in the interior of the province, and issued proclamations for the purpose of conciliating the voluntary submission of the inhabitants. These measures seemed to produce the desired effect. The only body of continental troops that still held out, was unexpectedly attacked and almost cut to pieces by a detachment of horse under Colonel Tarleton; and the people in every part of the country appeared ready to embrace the offers of pardon and protection held out to them. Sir Henry Clinton returned to New York, leaving 4000 men under Lord Cornwallis to secure the acquisitions already made, and to penetrate into North Carolina, as soon as the abatement of the intense heat of the season and other circumstances should concur to favour such an enterprise.

The departure of the commander in chief for New York was accelerated by the intelligence that a French armament was expected on that part of the coast, to co-operate with General Washington, and on the 10th of July, about three weeks after Sir Henry Clinton's return, M. de Ternay arrived at Rhode Island from France, with seven sail of the line, five frigates, and 6000 troops under the command of the Count de Rochambeau, who assured the States that this was only the vanguard of a much greater force, destined for their aid by the King his master. The British



fleet at New York being increased at the same juncture by the arrival of six sail of the line from England, which had followed close on M. de Ternay's track, a scheme was quickly formed by Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot to attack the French and Americans at Rhode Island: but General Washington, by a rapid movement, crossing the North River, and advancing towards New York, obliged them to desist.

The French and American commanders expected to be joined about this time by the Count de Guichen, with a land force and twenty ships of the line from the West Indies; in which case New York was to be assailed in every direction with irresistible fury: but his departure for Europe made it necessary for Washington to have a meeting with Rochambeau, about halfway between their respective camps, to concert new measures. While the former was absent from his army upon this service, General Arnold, who then commanded a considerable body of troops at West Point on the North River, but who had lately entered into a secret correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton for delivering up to him that important post, requested that a confidential person might be sent to him, finally to adjust the business and carry it into effect without delay. Major André, adjutant-general of the British army, a young man of singular accomplishments, was charged with this commission; and passed up the river unknown and unsuspected, from the head-quarters at New York, to the post of West Point. On his return by land, however, (September the 23rd,) he was taken in disguise, and with a false passport, by three American privates, to whom he in vain offered large rewards if they would suffer him to escape. On examination, the papers found upon him

discovered all the particulars of the conspiracy. His case being referred to a board of general officers, of which the Marquis de la Fayette was one, they unanimously determined that he came under the denomination of a spy; and that, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, he ought to suffer death. This, notwithstanding the solicitations and menaces of Sir Henry Clinton, who anxiously sought the means of saving him, was, on the 2d of October, inflicted by the hands of the hangman! a deed, the memory of which must rest, for ever, as an indelible stain upon the character of Washington. He died like a man and a soldier, regretting only the ignominious mode in which he was to forfeit his life, and his memory was honoured with a monument in Westminster Abbey. General Arnold, with great difficulty, made his escape to New York, where he was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general in the British army.

While the war may be said to have languished in the central colonies from the near equipoise of strength, or the secure positions of the contending parties, the state of affairs in the south afforded greater scope for military enterprise. The force, which had been left under Lord Cornwallis in Carolina, though disposed with the greatest judgment, seemed likely to be overwhelmed by the increasing armies of the Americans on the frontiers, whose confidence of success was not more owing to the superiority of their numbers, than to their having Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne at their head. But that general had now a Cornwallis and a Rawdon to contend with; and the laurels gained at Saratoga were doomed to fade in the neighbourhood of Camden. From this post, the British army, consisting of about 2000 effective men, set off in the night of the 15th of August, with the hopes of



surprising the Americans in their camp, which was twelve miles distant. General Gates had, at the very same time, formed a similar scheme of attacking Lord Cornwallis by surprise, and was then on his march for that purpose with about 6000 men, of which the militia formed the greatest part. The advanced guards of both armies met and fired upon each other at two o'clock in the morning, and when day-light appeared, Lord Rawdon and Colonel Webster charged the enemy with such vigour, that the militia fled at the first onset. The reserve, consisting of about 2500 regulars, stood their ground very firmly for near an hour, but were at length forced to give way in all quarters, abandoning their cannon, camp-equipage, and stores. Between 800 and 900 of the Americans, including General Gregory, were killed in the action, and in the pursuit, which was continued for more than twenty miles from the field of battle: 1000 were made prisoners, in which number were Baron de Kalbe, the second in command, and General Rutherford, the former of whom died soon after of his wounds. Only 69 of the British troops were killed in this engagement; and, to complete the destruction of the provincial force to the southward, Colonel Tarleton, two days after, came up with a detached corps under General Sumpter, near the Catawba Fords, and poured upon them so unexpectedly, that the attack was little more than a slaughter and rout. General Gates left the remains of his army to the care of General Smallwood, and retired into North Carolina.

The news of so brilliant a victory were not received with corresponding emotions of joy in England, the spirits of the people having lately been sunk in the contemplation of some of the severest blows which the British commerce had ever sustained. Admiral



Geary, who, on the death of Sir Charles Hardy in May, had been appointed to the command of the channel fleet, captured, in the beginning of July, twelve merchantmen from Port-au-Prince, and proceeded soon after to the southward, in the hope of falling in with a detached squadron of French and Spanish ships, of which he had received some intelligence. While he was cruising with this view off Cape Finisterre, a rich and considerable convoy for the East and West Indies, attended by the *Ramillies* and two frigates, sailed from Portsmouth in the latter end of July, and were intercepted on the 9th of August by the combined fleets under Don Lewis de Cordova. The *Ramillies*, with the frigates, and a few merchantmen, escaped; but more than fifty sail were taken and carried into Cadiz. Besides the immense value of the merchandize, a number of the ships were loaded with naval and military stores for the settlements in their respective places of destination. About the same time, an account was received of the capture of fourteen ships of the outward-bound Quebec fleet by some American privateers off the banks of Newfoundland; and this concurrence of losses spread a general gloom throughout the nation.

An alliance which had been entered into by the northern powers, under the name of the "Armed Neutrality," and some violent disputes with Holland, which seemed advancing to a direct rupture, tended in no small degree to increase the public despondence at this period. The Dutch, from the beginning of the disturbances in America, had not only supplied the people of that country with merchandize, but with warlike stores. After the interference of France and Spain in the quarrel, their ports were open equally to all the enemies of Great Britain; and the vast profits

of a contraband trade made them regardless of every other consideration. Various remonstrances were made on this head by the British ambassador at the Hague, but without effect. One of the subjects of complaint deserves particular notice. An encounter took place in September 1779 between Captain Pearson of the *Serapis* man of war, accompanied by the *Scarborough* frigate, having under their convoy the trade from the Baltic, and Paul Jones, a native of Scotland, the commander of an American squadron, which had for some time before infested the British seas. After a very fierce and bloody action, during which the convoy had full time to escape, the *Serapis* and *Scarborough* were taken and carried to the Texel. On this a very strong memorial was presented to the States General by Sir Joseph Yorke, claiming those ships and their crews, as having been captured by "a rebel subject and a criminal of the state." To which their High Mightinesses replied, that they were not authorized to pass judgment on those prizes or on the person of Paul Jones. The breach gradually widened. On the 1st of January following, Commodore Fielding fell in with a fleet of Dutch merchant ships off Portland, convoyed by a small squadron under Count Byland; and desiring permission to visit them, to ascertain whether they contained any contraband goods, was refused. On which he fired a shot a-head of the Dutch admiral, who returned a broadside: Commodore Fielding did the same; and the Dutch then struck their colours. In the mean time the greatest part of the convoy bore away to the coast of France; but such of them as remained, and had naval stores on board, were stopped, and the Dutch admiral was informed that he was at liberty to hoist his colours and prosecute his voyage. He refused, however, to quit his convoy, and accompanied Commodore Field-

ing to Portsmouth. A peremptory demand of reparation and redress was made by the States without effect; and, on the 17th of April, his Majesty published a declaration, stating, "that repeated memorials having been presented by his ambassador to the States General, demanding the succours stipulated by treaty, to which requisition they had given no answer, nor signified any intention of compliance, his Majesty considered their High Mightinesses as having deserted the alliance that had so long subsisted between Great Britain and the republic; and his Majesty from that time suspended, provisionally, all the stipulations of the several existing treaties, particularly of the marine treaty of 1764." The immediate design of such explicit language was to prevent the States, if possible, from acceding to the late confederacy of Russia, Denmark, and Sweden, the object of which was, that a free ship should make free goods, or, in other words, that a neutral ship, although loaded with a cargo belonging to one of the powers at war, should pass as free and unmolested as in time of peace. The Dutch, unwilling to forego the advantages of a highly profitable trade, had recourse, as usual, to procrastination, till matters were brought to an issue by the following incident. On the 3d of September, the *Mercury*, a congress packet, was taken by the *Vestal* frigate off the banks of Newfoundland. On board this packet was Mr. Laurens, late president of the congress, charged with a commission to Holland. On being brought to England, he was examined by the privy council, and committed to the Tower, on a charge of high treason. His papers, which had been thrown overboard, and saved from sinking by the alertness of a British seaman, were found to contain the sketch of a treaty of amity and commerce between the republic of Holland and the states of



America, some articles of which had been provisionally agreed to and signed two years before at Aix-la-Chapelle by William Lee, formerly an alderman of London, but then an agent for congress, and John de Neufville, a merchant of Amsterdam, acting under powers delegated to him by M. Van Berkel, the grand pensionary of that city. These papers were immediately transmitted to the British ambassador at the Hague, who was instructed to present a memorial to the States General, requiring them to disavow the proceedings of the grand pensionary and his accomplices, and to inflict upon them a punishment suitable to the magnitude of their offences: he was farther enjoined to declare, that, if satisfaction in these respects should be either refused or delayed, the States General would be considered as making themselves parties to the injury, and such measures be pursued as the law of nations authorized for compelling a reparation of the wrong. No satisfactory answer being returned to the memorial within the time expected, Sir Joseph Yorke was recalled; and on the 20th of December, letters of reprisal were ordered to be issued against the Dutch, a measure totally unexpected on the part of the States General, and for which they were ill-prepared. The manifesto published on this occasion, which was generally admitted as a master-piece of political writing, has been ascribed to Gibbon, the celebrated historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, and, at that time, one of the commissioners of trade.

The celebrated Maria Theresa, Empress of Germany, and Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, died on the 29th of November in the 63d year of her age, after a protracted reign of 40 years. She was succeeded by her son, the Emperor Joseph the Second.

## CHAPTER XIV.

PARLIAMENT was unexpectedly dissolved on the 1st of September, 1780, and a new one convened the 31st of October; but nothing worthy of specific notice passed in either House before the holidays, except the election of a speaker of the Commons, in which the strength of the opposition was exerted for the re-appointment of Sir Fletcher Norton; but Mr. Cornwall was chosen in his room by 203 voices against 134. His Majesty, in his opening speech, declared his satisfaction in having an opportunity, by the recent election, of receiving the most certain information of the disposition and wishes of his people, to which he was always inclined to pay the utmost attention. He acknowledged the arduous situation of public affairs; but the late signal successes of his arms in Georgia and Carolina would, he trusted, have important consequences, in bringing the war to a happy conclusion. An amendment to the address, consisting in the omission of several complimentary paragraphs, was moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Thomas Grenville; but it was negatived, by a majority of 69, in favour of the original address.

On the day Parliament met after the Christmas recess, the 23d of January, 1781, the sum of 80,000*l.* was granted for the relief of Barbadoes, and 40,000*l.* for Jamaica, in consequence of the dreadful hurricane with which those islands in particular had been visited. Bridge-town, the capital of the former, was almost levelled to the ground, and some thousands of people were killed. At Jamaica, the town of Savanna-la-Mar was utterly swept away, and the island under-



went a terrible devastation of property and loss of lives.

On the 25th of January, two days after, Lord North delivered a message from the King, in which his Majesty acquainted the House of Commons, that, during the recess of Parliament, he had been obliged to direct letters of marque and general reprisal to be issued against the States General of the United Provinces. For the causes and motives of his conduct he referred to his public manifesto, which, with various other papers, he had ordered to be laid before the House. Lord North in consequence moved, "that an address be presented to his Majesty, assuring him, that the House would, with a firm and determined resolution, support the just and necessary war against Holland, for the maintenance of the honour of his crown, and the rights and interests of his people." This motion was seconded by Lord Lewisham, but it met with considerable opposition in both Houses; and, in the Peers, it was observed, by Lord Camden, that, "as to what was called the treaty between Holland and America, it was the mere unauthorised act of Van Berkel, and betrayed neither directly nor indirectly any intention in the States General of a hostile nature. It did not even appear that they knew any thing of this man or his colleagues; and much less that they had determined to ratify this pretended treaty, or project of a treaty, by which no one was bound, and no one could be injured." The addresses, however, were carried by great majorities; but the dissentient peers recorded their objections in a strong protest.

Mr. Burke, not dismayed by the rejection of his reform bill last year, moved, on the 15th of February, for leave to introduce a similar measure. He opened



his proposition by stating the powerful motives that engaged him now to resume his undertaking; which were, the celebrated resolutions of the late Parliament, respecting the alarming increase of the influence of the crown; the general wish and expectation of the people; and the direct applications to himself from several of the most considerable counties. Leave was given, without opposition, to bring in the bill; but, on the motion for the second reading, it was thrown out by a majority of 233 against 190, after a vigorous debate, which was distinguished by the first parliamentary exertion of the Hon. William Pitt, second son of the late Earl Chatham, who, in early youth, was elected a member of the present Parliament. He delivered himself with grace, facility, and animation; his voice was rich and striking; and his reasoning displayed all the fire of his father. One great object, he said, of all the petitions which had been presented, was a recommendation of economy in the public expenditure; and the design of the present bill was to carry into effect those wishes. The bill had also another object still more important, and that was the reduction of the influence of the crown—an influence which was the more to be dreaded, because more secret in its attacks, and more concealed in its operations, than the power of prerogative. The youthful orator adverted to the extraordinary objections which had been made to the bill, which proposed to bring no more than 200,000*l.* per annum into the public coffers, and that sum was insignificant, in comparison of the millions annually expended. What then, said he, is the conclusion we are left to deduce? The calamities of the present crisis are too great to be benefited by economy. Our expenses are so enormous, that it is useless to give ourselves any

concern about them; we have spent and are spending so much, that it is foolish to think of saving any thing. Such is the language which the opponents of this bill have virtually employed. It had also been said, he observed, that the King's civil list was an irresumable parliamentary grant, and it had even been compared to a private freehold. The weakness of such arguments was their best refutation. The civil list revenue was granted to his Majesty not for his private use, but for the support of the executive government of the state. It was granted to support the dignity and interests of the empire, to maintain its grandeur, to pay the judges and foreign ministers, to maintain justice and support respect, to pay the great officers necessary to the lustre of the crown; and it was proportioned to the dignity and opulence of the people. The Parliament made the grant, and undoubtedly had a right to resume it when the pressure of the times rendered such resumption necessary. Upon the whole, he considered the present bill as essential to the being and independence of this country, and he would give it his most determined support.

The minister had soon another contest to sustain, which seemed to indicate a decline of his credit with the public, as well as of his influence in Parliament. On the 7th of March he brought forward his annual statement of the supplies and resources for the current service. The entire expenditure he calculated at 21,000,000*l.* twelve of which it would be necessary to raise by a loan. The terms were unusually high: a contract had been entered into with the subscribers to grant 150*l.* capital stock at three per cent. and 25*l.* capital stock at four per cent. for every 100*l.* in money, being 9,000,000*l.* more than the sum actually paid into the exchequer. To defray the interest of



this loan, new taxes would be wanting to the amount of 660,000*l.* annually, that is 60,000*l.* more than the legal interest of five per cent. exclusive of which, as the subscription to the loan bore a premium of ten per cent. the farther sum of 1,200,000*l.* appeared to be lost to the nation by this improvident bargain. Mr. Fox reprobated it as the most corrupt in its origin, the most shameful in its progress, and the most injurious in its consequences, that ever came under the contemplation of the House. He particularly objected to the lottery annexed to the other douceurs of the loan, both as adding to advantages already too great, and as prejudicial to the morals of the people, he therefore moved that the lottery clause be omitted, which amendment was supported by 111 voices against 169. But the business did not end here: the opposition to the loan bill was renewed under a variety of forms, during its passage through the Commons; and when carried to the Lords, the Marquis of Rockingham and some of his friends did not fall short of Mr. Fox in the severity of their censure. The only apology for such a contract having been the low state of the funds and the imperious necessity of the times, the marquis said, he did not doubt but the matter originated in *necessity*; for such was the critical situation of the minister, that he found himself compelled to resort to this shameful waste of the public money, in order to fix and attach the wavering and hesitating minds of his abettors. Eight of the peers entered a protest against the bill on the journals. Some weeks afterwards the subject was revived in the Lower House by a motion of Sir George Saville for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the circumstances of the last loan; for though the bargain, he said, had been irrevocably ratified, it was



not yet too late, on discovering the shameless prodigality of the terms on which it was concluded, to pass a vote of censure, or even of impeachment, on the man who had sacrificed the public in so gross and daring a manner. This gave rise to a vehement debate, at the conclusion of which the motion was rejected by a majority of 46 only, in a full House, the numbers being 209 to 163.

Mr. Fox made an effort, in the course of this session, to introduce a bill for the repeal, or at least for a modification of the marriage act. The principal feature in the proposed bill was, that it reduced the legal age for contracting marriage to eighteen in males, and sixteen in females, and no marriage was to be annulled after the parties had cohabited for one year. The bill passed the House of Commons, but was rejected by the Lords.

Towards the end of the session, Mr. Fox moved the House to resolve itself into a committee, to consider of the American war, for the purpose of devising some means of accommodation. This motion was supported in an animated speech by Mr. Pitt, who expressed his utter abhorrence of a war, "which was conceived," he said, "in injustice, nurtured in folly, and whose footsteps were marked with slaughter and devastation. It exhibited the height of moral depravity and human turpitude. The nation was drained of its best blood and its vital resources, for which nothing was received in return but a series of inefficient victories or disgraceful defeats, victories obtained over men struggling in the holy cause of liberty, or defeats which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relatives, slain in a detested and impious quarrel." The motion was rejected by a majority of 73.

The other proceedings of this session, which was protracted to the 18th of July, are more distinguished for violence of debate than for efficacy or importance. The appointment of delegates by several of the associated counties, to meet in London for the purpose of promoting the objects of their former petitions, proved a copious source of parliamentary contention; and the events of the war, the sphere of which was now considerably enlarged, afforded every day some fresh occasion of dispute. The accounts from the East Indies in particular were very perplexing. A spirit of intrigue and conquest, of rapacity and ambition, seemed to have pervaded the system of British government in that part of the world, and to have provoked a most formidable confederacy of the native powers. While a part of the company's forces were engaged on one side in hostilities with the Mahrattas, Hyder Ally, on the other, broke into the Carnatic with a vast army in the month of July, 1780, and committed the most dreadful ravages. On the 10th of September, he surrounded a large body of troops under Colonel Baillie, who were entirely cut to pieces, or made prisoners. He then attacked and made himself master of Arcot; and scarcely did the government of Madras believe itself to be in safety, when Sir Eyre Coote arrived to take the command of the forces on the coast of Coromandel, and by the most extraordinary efforts stopped Hyder's career, and defeated him in several engagements, in which, to use the gallant veteran's own words, "every nerve was exerted to the very extent of possibility." The first intelligence of those unexpected convulsions in the east occasioned the appointment of a secret committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the causes of the Mahratta war, and that in the Carnatic.



Their reports on the subject afterwards engaged no small share of public notice, but did not produce any effectual correction of the evil. A bill had likewise been brought in, and was passed at the close of the session, for restraining the arbitrary encroachments of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, the governor-general and council having been under the necessity of forcibly resisting the proceedings of the chief justice, Sir Elijah Impey. By another bill the company were, for a limited term, continued in the enjoyment of their present privileges, with a clause compelling them to pay about 400,000*l.* to the public, in aid of supply, and as a just participation in their revenues and profits.

The military history of the present year was marked in its commencement by a second attempt of the French upon the island of Jersey. The Baron de Rullecourt, who had been next in command to Count Nassau in the former attack, landed with about 800 men at a place called the Violet Bank in the night of the 15th of January; and, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, when the day began to dawn, the market-place of St. Helier was found occupied by French troops. The house of Major Corbet, the lieutenant-governor, being entirely surrounded, he was so far intimidated as to sign articles of capitulation; but when Elizabeth castle was summoned, Captain Aylward, the commander, fired upon the French and obliged them to retreat; and Major Pierson, a young and gallant officer, second in command, having assembled the regular troops and militia of the island on the heights near the town, attacked the enemy with the greatest resolution. Baron Rullecourt being at the commencement of the action mortally wounded, the French troops in less than half an hour laid down



their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Unfortunately almost the last shot fired previously to the surrender proved fatal to Major Pier-son, in whose conduct discretion and valour had been equally conspicuous.

Early information of the rupture with Holland having been transmitted to the West Indies, Admiral Rodney, who had returned to that station from New York, and General Vaughan, appeared with a considerable force, on the 3d of February, before the island of St. Eustatia, which, though small and sterile, was at that time a great deposit of wealth and mart of traffic. De Graaff, the governor, being utterly incapable of making any defence, was compelled to surrender at discretion; and the immense property of the island was declared to be confiscated, with a degree of indiscriminate and unusual rigour, which can hardly be justified. A memorial was presented to Admiral Rodney and General Vaughan by the hands of Mr. Glanville his Majesty's solicitor-general for St. Christopher's, strongly representing, "that if by the fate of war the British West India islands should fall into the hands of an enraged enemy, the conduct of St. Eustatia would be a pretext for them to retaliate; that the conquerors of all civilized countries had avoided the invasion of private property; that the generosity of the enemy had been very conspicuous; and even in the case of Grenada, which had been taken by storm, the rights of individuals had been held sacred: that Eustatia was a free port, and the rich and various commodities found there were far from being the sole property of the Dutch; that a great portion of it belonged to the British subjects; and that, previously to this declaration of war, the trade to Eustatia was strictly legal, and the officers

of his Majesty's customs cleared out vessels from all the ports of Great Britain and Ireland for this island. And not merely the legality, but the propriety of this trade was confirmed by the conduct of his Majesty's naval officers in those seas ; for if the King's enemies were supplied by the trade of his subjects through Eustatia, they were likewise supplied, through the same channel, by the sale of the prizes captured by his Majesty's ships of war." The admiral replied, " that he had not as yet leisure to peruse the memorial ; but that the island of Eustatia was Dutch, every thing in it was Dutch, every thing was under the protection of the Dutch flag, and as Dutch it should be treated." The value of the commodities thus seized was estimated at 4,000,000*l.* sterling. A Dutch frigate of 36 guns, five others of inferior force, and more than one hundred and fifty sail of merchantmen, were taken in the bay ; and a fleet of thirty ships richly laden, which had sailed for Holland two days before, were pursued and brought back, with a man of war that convoyed them, under the command of Admiral Byland, who lost his life in a vain effort of resistance. The neighbouring small islands of St. Martin and Saba were reduced in a similar manner ; and, nearly about the same time, the Dutch settlements of Demerara, Issequibo, and Berbice, on the southern main, made a tender of submission to the Governor of Barbadoes, the rivers leading to the two former having been boldly entered, and all the vessels seized, by a squadron of privateers from Bristol. The deputies from those settlements were referred to Admiral Rodney and General Vaughan, who thought them deserving of more lenity than the people of St. Eustatia, and secured to them the full possession of their civil government, and private property.

While the British commanders were detained in adjusting the concerns of their new acquisition, a French fleet under the Count de Grasse, after a partial engagement with Admiral Hood, whom Rodney had detached to intercept it, steered its course to the island of Tobago, on which the Marquis de Bouillé made an immediate descent. Admiral Rodney, on receiving intelligence of this attack, dispatched six ships of the line, with some frigates and troops, for its relief; but these finding the French in great force, were obliged to return; and Rodney, accompanied by Vaughan, sailed with the whole fleet for Tobago. He arrived off the coast on the 4th of June, but had the mortification to learn that the island had surrendered two days before; and was baffled in all his attempts, during the remainder of the summer, to bring the enemy to a general engagement.

Other mortifying circumstances soon concurred to render the conquest of St. Eustatia an object rather of vexation than of triumph. The necessity of disposing of the merchandize facilitated the purchases by neutrals, who, notwithstanding every precaution, conveyed the articles to the enemy at a cheap rate, and in great plenty. A rich convoy, freighted with the most valuable commodities taken there, was intercepted on its way to England by a French squadron; and the island itself, with its little dependencies, St. Martin's and Saba, were re-conquered in November, by a small force under the Marquis de Bouillé, who, having received intelligence of the habitual negligence of the garrison, landed by night about 400 troops, part of a much larger force which the tempestuousness of the weather had separated, in a cove at the back of the island. Confiding in his fortune, he advanced with his troops, when daylight appeared, to the citadel, which



they immediately stormed, and carried; and, the surprise being complete, nearly 700 men, with Colonel Cockburne, their commander, were constrained to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Restitution, so far as circumstances would permit, was immediately made to those individuals who had been stripped of their property; and a declaration was published, that the French forces defended the island only till relieved by the troops of their High Mightinesses.

The campaign in America, however, commenced with a circumstance which appeared favourable to the royal cause. The very embarrassed state of the American finances had subjected their army to great hardships and privations: the soldiers had long been without pay, and were destitute of such clothing as the season required, when, on the 1st of January, the whole of the division called the Pennsylvania line, at once revolted; and, collecting the artillery, stores, &c. belonging to them, moved in an entire body out of the camp. General Clinton, anxious to improve this apparent advantage, immediately passed over to Staten Island with a large body of forces, and dispatched messengers to the revolters with almost unlimited offers of pay, pardon, and protection. These offers, however, were rejected with disdain, and two messengers were actually delivered up to congress and hanged. Having obtained a promise of the redress of grievances, the revolters soon returned to their station.

An expedition, under the conduct of Generals Arnold and Phillips, was soon afterwards sent into Virginia, where they laid waste the country, and did much damage to the Americans by the destruction of a large quantity of valuable stores, deposited in different parts; and a permanent station was esta-

blished at Portsmouth, to co-operate with Lord Cornwallis, whose transactions to the southward were carried on with spirit and success. A plan having been formed between the French and American commanders, Rochambeau and Washington, to invest the post occupied by General Arnold, a warm engagement took place in March, between Admiral Arbuthnot and a French squadron, at the entrance of the Chesapeake, in which the former obtained the advantage, and was left master of the navigation of the bay.

Although the opening of the campaign, and occasional successes during the year, excited considerable expectations, they served only to increase, eventually, the dismal effect of multiplied disasters. After the victory at Camden, the excessive heats and great unhealthiness of the season had laid an insuperable restraint for some time on Lord Cornwallis's march into North Carolina; and the total destruction of a corps of royalists under Major Ferguson, who had been sent towards the frontiers, and who bravely continued an unequal contest till he received a mortal wound, obliged his lordship to suspend any farther attempts till the beginning of January, when he began his march; but finding that General Greene, by whom Gates had been lately superseded in the command of the southern army, had detached Colonel Morgan, at the head of a body of light troops, to penetrate into South Carolina, and not choosing to leave so considerable a corps in his rear, he ordered Colonel Tarleton, at the head of a superior force, to drive Morgan from his station. On the 17th the Americans were discovered at a place called the Cowpens, near an open wood, drawn up in two lines, the first of which consisted of militia only, the second of con-

tinental infantry and Virginia riflemen ; and a chosen body of cavalry was posted as a *corps de reserve*, at some distance in the rear. Colonel Tarleton led on the attack with his accustomed impetuosity ; and the American militia, as Colonel Morgan had foreseen, gave way on all quarters. The English then confidently advanced to the attack of the second line ; and the continental troops, after an obstinate conflict, retreated towards the cavalry. In the interim, the militia had formed again agreeably to orders, and the American *corps de reserve*, perceiving the British troops disordered in the pursuit, came forward to the attack, the militia and continentals at the same time vigorously charging with fixed bayonets. Astonished at these unexpected charges, the English advanced corps immediately fell back, and communicated a general confusion and panic, which all the efforts of Colonel Tarleton could not retrieve. The consequence was, that the cannon, colours, and baggage waggons fell into the hands of the victors, and 700 men were slain or captured.

In the hope of recovering the prisoners, and intercepting the victorious Americans, Lord Cornwallis immediately marched with the greater part of his army, in rapid pursuit of Colonel Morgan. That officer had crossed the Catawba a few hours only before the arrival of his lordship on its southern banks, where, by heavy rains, he was detained two or three days. On the 1st of February the passage was found practicable, but Colonel Morgan had by that time crossed the Yadkin, and effected his junction with General Greene, who, on the 5th, wrote confidentially to a military correspondent, General Huger, that he was preparing to receive the enemy's attack. At length, the whole American army, after



crossing the Dan into Virginia, suddenly returned into the province of North Carolina; and with powerful reinforcements took a strong position near Guilford Court-house, on the 14th of March. At day-break, on the 15th, Lord Cornwallis, with a very inferior force, advanced to the attack of the Americans, who were ready formed in three lines to receive him; and after a long and severe contest, the British ultimately carried their point, on which General Greene drew off the army, and left the field of battle, with the artillery, consisting of four field-pieces, in their hands. The Americans retired in good order, and took post behind a river, three miles only from the scene of action. This victory was, however, dearly purchased with the loss of 100 killed and above 400 wounded, amounting to one-third of all the British troops engaged; for the army, worn down by the hardships and fatigues of a march of 600 miles, short of provisions, and destitute of tents, was in no condition to pursue the enemy. The night succeeding the battle was remarkable for its darkness; the rain fell in torrents; and many of the wounded, sinking under accumulated miseries, expired before morning. Lord Cornwallis now found himself under the necessity of directing his march towards Wilmington, near the mouth of Cape Fear River, a post already occupied by a detachment of British troops, where he arrived on the 7th of April. General Greene, with 2000 men, immediately proceeded towards Camden, which was gallantly maintained by Lord Rawdon, who, with only 800, attacked the Americans by surprise, and routed them with considerable loss; but the surrounding stations of Fort Motte, Orangeburgh, Congarees, and Augusta, being successively forced, his lordship was compelled to evacuate Camden, and retire to

the south of the Santee. General Greene then laid close siege to the settlement of Ninety-six, which was considered as commanding the whole of the back country ; and on the approach of Lord Rawdon, who had recently received considerable reinforcements from England, attempted to storm the garrison, but was repulsed with loss by Colonel Cruger, the governor. He then retired with his army behind the Saluda, when Lord Rawdon withdrew the garrison from Fort Ninety-six, and retired to Orangeburgh ; General Greene re-crossed the Saluda, and took a strong position on the high hills of Santee, whence he detached different parties to intercept the convoys, and beat up the quarters of the English between Orangeburgh and Charlestown. The English, now under the command of Colonel Stewart, (Lord Rawdon's health obliging him to return to England,) advanced to the point of junction between the Wateree and Congarée, in order to cover the country to the south and south-east of those rivers, but General Greene passing the latter, Colonel Stewart immediately fell back forty miles, to a place called Eutaw Springs, where he took an advantageous position, his right extending to Eutaw, and his left to a rising ground which was occupied by a *corps de reserve*. General Greene, with the American army, advanced to the attack on the 8th of September with the greatest resolution ; and, after an obstinate engagement, the British gave way, but were rallied by Colonel Stewart, and formed again under protection of an effective and well-directed fire from a large and moated house, which served them for a redoubt. Being unable to dislodge them, General Greene ordered a retreat, leaving four pieces of artillery in the hands of the British, two of which had been



taken by the Americans in the early part of the engagement. The English were in no condition to pursue, and both parties claimed the victory. In the evening of the next day, Colonel Stewart, abandoning the Eutaw, moved towards Charlestown, and General Greene regained his former encampment on the high hills of Santee.

Lord Cornwallis, on the march of General Greene's army to the southward, found himself reduced to a perplexing dilemma—either to abandon the Carolinas to their fate, or sacrifice his hopes of future conquests, and entirely disappoint the sanguine expectations, which he knew to have been formed in England, on the result of the present campaign. At length, he determined on marching to Virginia, and, on the 20th of May, arrived at Petersburg, where he effected a junction with General Arnold, who had been strengthened by a detachment of about 2000 men sent thither by Sir Henry Clinton. From Petersburg, Lord Cornwallis advanced to James river, which he crossed at West-town; and, thence marching through Hanover county, crossed the South Anna or Pamunky river, whence by a rapid movement Colonel Tarleton had nearly surprised the assembly of Virginia, then sitting at Charlotte-ville. Various expeditions were undertaken to different parts of the province, with uniform success; and Lord Cornwallis, by a well-concerted manœuvre, took a position between the American army and its grand dépôt of stores at Albemarle Court-house. The British general knew that the Marquis de la Fayette was on his march to prevent that important capture, but conceived that he could only attain his object by passing a road where he might be attacked to advantage; the marquis, however, extricated himself from this difficulty,



by opening in the night a nearer and long disused road to the Court-house; and the next day, to the surprise of Lord Cornwallis, he had taken a position which effectually covered it from attack. Lord Cornwallis, finding his plan frustrated, proceeded to Williamsburg, the capital of the province, which he took possession of on the 26th of June without opposition. Here he received advices from Sir Henry Clinton, who, conceiving New York to be in danger from the united forces of the French and Americans, desired the troops under General Arnold, which he had detached to Virginia, to be returned. With this requisition Lord Cornwallis was compelled, however reluctantly, to comply. Aware that his adversary had been lately reinforced by a strong body of troops, he did not think his present force adequate to maintain his station at Williamsburg, and therefore determined to cross James river to Portsmouth. As he was about to embark, his rear was attacked by General Wayne with the van of the American army, who, after sustaining an unequal conflict for some time, ordered a rapid retreat. Lord Cornwallis, suspecting that this attack must be meant to draw him into an ambuscade, fortunately for Wayne, forbade all pursuit. In the night his lordship passed over to Portsmouth, where he purposed to establish his head-quarters; but, on further deliberation, he removed to York-town.

General Washington had long meditated an attack upon New York, and General Clinton had good reason to believe that this was finally determined upon at an interview between the American general and Count Rochambeau, which took place in May; and in consequence of this project, great preparations were made in the vicinity of New York, indicatory of an

approaching siege. The arrival, however, of considerable reinforcements from England, and the recall of so large a body of troops from Virginia, led General Washington to meditate a change in his plan of operations. At length a letter from Count de Grasse, stating that his destination was unalterably fixed to the Chesapeak, left no alternative; and a joint answer was immediately sent by the American and French generals, that they would lose no time in removing the army to the south of the Delaware, there to meet the admiral. All the appearances of attack upon New York were, however, still carefully kept up, till at length, on the 24th of August, the allied army suddenly decamped, passed the North river, and by rapid marches proceeded to Philadelphia, where they arrived on the 30th; the fleet of Count de Grasse, consisting of twenty-four ships of the line, entering nearly at the same time the bay of Chesapeak. So strongly impressed was the mind of the British commander in chief with the expectation of an attack upon New York, that he for a long time conceived the southern march of the American army to be only a feint. At length, finding that the van of the American army had actually passed the Delaware, and receiving authentic intelligence that the fleet of Count de Grasse was destined to the Chesapeak, he communicated his suspicions to Lord Cornwallis; at the same time assuring his lordship, that he would either reinforce him by every possible means in his power, or make the best diversion he could in his favour. It appears, that the leading ideas of the British generals did not coincide; and it may be remarked, that from the moment Lord Cornwallis began to act in subordination to orders sent him from New York he ceased to be successful.



On the 5th of September, the English fleet, consisting of nineteen ships of the line, under Admiral Graves, appeared off the Cape of Virginia, and Count de Grasse, expecting a reinforcement from Rhode island, stood out to sea for their protection. A warm engagement ensued, and the count, being joined by the squadron of M. Barras, was left undisputed master of the Chesapeake. Relief was from this time wholly impracticable; and Lord Cornwallis withdrew within his works, making every preparation for a vigorous defence. York-town being situated nearly at the extremity of a narrow peninsula, enclosed between York river to the north, and James river to the south, it was invested with great ease and advantage by an enemy who commanded the navigations of the two rivers. On the 14th of October the besiegers, notwithstanding a well-directed and incessant fire, had advanced far in their second parallel. As they were greatly incommoded in their approaches by two redoubts at the distance of 200 yards from the English lines, it was determined to attack them at the same time by different detachments of French and Americans. Both of the redoubts were carried, sword in hand, with resistless impetuosity. By this time the batteries of the besiegers were covered with 100 pieces of heavy ordnance; and the British works, enfiladed in almost every part, and nearly demolished, could scarcely mount a single gun. In this extremity no resource remained but to endeavour to transport the garrison across York river to Gloucester-point, opposite to York-town, where works had been also erected, and were still occupied by part of the English army. This intention, however, was totally frustrated by a violent storm after the embarkation had actually commenced, and Lord Cornwallis was reduced to



the distressing necessity of proposing terms of capitulation, which were granted only on condition of his lordship's surrendering himself, and the forces under his command, prisoners of war. The honour of marching out with colours flying, which had been refused to General Lincoln on his giving up Charlestown, was now refused to Lord Cornwallis; and General Lincoln was appointed to receive the submission of the army of York-town precisely in the same way his own had been conducted eighteen months before. The garrison, at the time of the surrender, which took place on the 19th of October, amounted to 5950 men, but only 4017 were fit for duty; 1500 sailors also became prisoners of war. The besiegers were 19,000. Lord Cornwallis endeavoured to obtain an indemnity for those of the inhabitants who had joined him; but he was obliged to consent that the loyalists in his camp should be given up to the unconditional mercy of their countrymen. His lordship, however, obtained permission for the Bonetta sloop of war to pass unexamined to New York, which was devised as the means of screening such of them as were most obnoxious to the Americans.

A British fleet and an army of 7000 men, destined for the relief of Lord Cornwallis, arrived off the Chesapeake on the 24th of October; but on receiving advice of his lordship's surrender, they returned to Sandy Hook and New York. Such was the fate of that general, from whose gallantry and previous successes the speedy conquest of the southern states had been so confidently expected.

To this terrible overthrow, which left little hope of recovering the American provinces, must be added another loss on the same continent in the early part of the campaign. Don Galvez, whose successful ex-

pedition, in the year 1779, against the British settlements on the Mississippi, has been already noticed, made farther advances into West Florida the following year, and being at length reinforced by a powerful fleet and army from the Havannah, completed the conquest of the whole province by the reduction of Pensacola on the 8th of May. General Campbell, the governor, acquired no small reputation, even in misfortune, by his judicious and spirited defence of the place for two months, with a motley garrison of 950 men, against a fleet of fifteen sail of the line, and a land force almost ten times the number of the besieged.

Spain did not appear to be consoled by this success for the disappointment she still felt in the siege of Gibraltar, on the reduction of which she was so intent, that she scarcely seemed to have another object in the war. The stupendous works which she raised before the place, were covered with the most formidable artillery that had ever, perhaps, been known in any siege; but all her efforts could not prevent timely relief from being conveyed to the garrison, first by Sir George Rodney, and afterwards by Admiral Darby, who had succeeded Geary in the command of the channel fleet. The Spaniards endeavoured to revenge the failure of their gun-boats in an attempt to burn the convoy of victuallers in the bay, by keeping up against the fortress an unremitted fire, day and night, for three weeks, from 170 pieces of heavy cannon and fourscore mortars. The town and its inhabitants were the sacrifice; but the loss on the side of the garrison was inconsiderable, and the damage done to the works was too trifling to give any concern to the defenders. During a long calm, which succeeded the gradual abatement of this tre-



mendous cannonade and bombardment, the brave Elliot formed a scheme of effectual retaliation. At three o'clock in the morning of the 27th of November, a strong detachment, commanded by Brigadier-general Ross, sallied out of the garrison, and attacked the enemy's works with such skill and impetuosity, that the Spaniards gave way on every side, and in less than half an hour five batteries, with all the lines of approach, communication, and traverse, were in flames; the magazines blowing up one after another as the conflagration reached them; and the Spaniards offering no other resistance than a distant and ill-directed fire from the forts of St. Philip and St. Barbara.

The fleet dispatched for the relief of Gibraltar, was accompanied by a squadron under Commodore Johnstone, late one of the commissioners to America, but now appointed to conduct an expedition to the Cape of Good Hope. The court of Versailles, knowing the present inability of the States General to protect their foreign dominions, sent a superior squadron under M. Suffrein to counteract the designs of the English; and coming up with them at Port Praya, in the island of St. Jago, the French admiral scrupled not to violate the neutrality of the Portuguese flag, by attacking the squadron of Commodore Johnstone, while it lay in the harbour, dispersed and unsuspecting of danger. British valour was eminently displayed in repelling the attack, under every disadvantage of number, situation, and surprise; and the French were beaten off, after suffering severely in the conflict; but immediately proceeding to the Cape, they secured that settlement from any hostile attempt. The main object of the expedition being thus defeated, the commodore directed his force against five Dutch



East Indiamen in Saldanha Bay, which he captured and accompanied to England, a part of his squadron, and a convoy of transports and merchant ships, which were destined for the East Indies, having proceeded thither.

Suffrein's timely arrival at the Cape was certainly the means of preserving that place, in itself incapable of any vigorous resistance ; but the French admiral did not reach the East Indies soon enough to afford the like protection to the Dutch settlements there, or to save Hyder Ally's marine from destruction. While Sir Eyre Coote was attacking Hyder with equal vigour and success by land, Sir Edward Hughes not only blocked up his ports on the Malabar coast, but destroyed his shipping at Calicut and Mangalore, two of his principal arsenals, on which all his hopes of becoming a maritime power were founded. Before the close of the year, the Dutch fort of Negapatam, in the Tanjore country, the garrison of which had been reinforced by 2300 of Hyder's troops, was taken by a joint operation of the British naval and military forces ; and, early in January, 1782, they became masters, with still greater ease, of the valuable settlement of Trincomale, in the island of Ceylon. The many subsequent encounters between Hughes and Suffrein, though obstinately, and even heroically, contested, were attended with few decisive advantages on either side.

The misfortunes of the Dutch, in both the Indies, were greatly increased by their losses nearer home, many of their merchantmen and single ships being taken at the beginning of the rupture ; though no engagement happened between the fleets of the two nations till the 5th of August. Early in the morning of that day, an English squadron, commanded by

Admiral Hyde Parker, met upon the Dogger Bank a Dutch squadron, somewhat superior in force, commanded by Admiral Zoutman, having under his convoy a fleet bound to the Baltic. On perceiving the English fleet bearing down, the Dutch admiral, who was to leeward, lay-to, and suffered them to approach within half musket shot without firing a gun, when a dreadful cannonade commenced, which was kept up without interruption for three hours and forty minutes, the action then ceasing only because the ships on both sides, from the damages they had respectively sustained, were no longer manageable. The Dutch, after some time, bore away with their convoy for the Texel, which they reached with great difficulty, one of their largest ships sinking before they could make the harbour. Admiral Parker returned in a shattered condition to the Nore, where he received the honour of a visit from the King on board his own ship, and was offered knighthood as the reward of his valour; but nothing could alter his resolution of resigning his command, which was imputed to indignation at the insufficiency and bad condition of his fleet. Admiral Zoutman was received at Amsterdam with great applause.

An attempt made by Admiral Kempenfelt, with thirteen sail of the line and four frigates, to intercept a French squadron and convoy carrying reinforcements to the East and West Indies, concluded the naval enterprises of this year. The English admiral fell in with the enemy on the 12th of December in a hard gale of wind, and succeeded in cutting off a part of the convoy; but was obliged to relinquish any farther design, on perceiving the enemy's force to consist of nineteen sail of heavy line of battle ships, besides two more armed *en flute*. About twenty of

the prizes arrived safe in England ; and their importance, being all crowded with troops, or heavy laden with stores and provisions, served to excite the dissatisfaction of the public at the negligence of those who had not supplied Kempenfelt with such a force as would have enabled him to take or destroy the whole French fleet and convoy.

Parliament was opened on the 27th of November, by a speech from the throne, in which his Majesty observed, that the war was still unhappily prolonged, and that, to his great concern, the events of it had been very unfortunate to his army in Virginia, having ended in the total loss of his forces in that province : but he could not consent to sacrifice, either to his own desire of peace, or to the temporary ease and relief of his subjects, those essential rights and permanent interests upon which the strength and security of this country must ever principally depend. The King concluded by calling for the concurrence and support of Parliament, and a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of his people. Mr. Fox, who inveighed against the measures of government with much bitterness, moved, as an amendment to the proposed address, that the whole be omitted excepting the first paragraph, and the following words inserted : “ And we will, without delay, apply ourselves with united hearts to propose and digest such counsels as may in this crisis excite the efforts, point the arms, and, by a total change of system, command the confidence of all his Majesty’s subjects.” This amendment was supported by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke ; but the original address was carried by a large majority. A similar amendment was moved in the Upper House by the Earl of Shel-



burne, and supported by the Duke of Richmond; but that also was negatived.

On the 12th of December, a motion was made by Sir James Lowther, "that it be resolved by the House, that the war carried on against the colonies and plantations of North America had been ineffectual to the purposes for which it was undertaken; and that it was also the opinion of the House, that all further attempts to reduce the Americans to obedience by force must be injurious to this country, by weakening her powers to resist her ancient and confederated enemies." Notwithstanding the utmost opposition of the minister, the motion was negatived by no greater majority than 220 to 179.

Two days after the motion of Sir James Lowther, the army estimates were laid before the House; from which it appeared that the whole military force required for the year 1782, including the provincial corps serving in America, amounted to 195,000 men. One hundred thousand seamen and marines had been already voted by the House. It was, however, stated by Lord George Germaine, that the ministry were of opinion, considering the present situation of affairs, and the misfortunes of the war, that it would not be right to continue any longer the plan on which it had hitherto been conducted; and that a fresh army would not be sent to supply the place of that captured at York-town. It was intended only to preserve such posts in America as might facilitate and co-operate with the enterprises of our fleets. In the debate which ensued, General Conway declared himself anxious for a recal of our fleets and armies from America. Of the two evils he would choose the least, and submit to the independence of America,

rather than persist in the prosecution of so pernicious and ruinous a war. As to the idea now suggested of a war of posts, what garrison, he asked, would be able to maintain them, when it was well known that even Sir Henry Clinton, at New York, did not consider himself as secure? The impression made by the successive speeches of the principal leaders in opposition, in this debate, was too great to be concealed; but the estimates, as originally moved, were at length voted by a considerable majority.

Though Lord North still preserved a tone of firmness, and carried the various questions relating to the estimates, the supplies, and the necessity of a new loan of 13,500,000*l.* with large majorities in the House of Commons, yet it was easy to see that his power was tottering, and could not be of long continuance. In every debate introduced by the opposition for the avowed purpose of condemning the conduct of the war, the number of those who voted for the exculpation of the ministry decreased every day. A motion of censure on Lord Sandwich, first lord of the admiralty, brought forward by Mr. Fox soon after the Christmas recess, was rejected by a majority of only 22; and even that majority did not continue, but was reduced to 19, in a House consisting of 453 members, on the renewal of the same motion in substance, though a little varied in form, on the 20th of February. Lord George Germaine seemed to shrink from similar attacks on himself by resigning the seals of his office to Mr. Welbore Ellis, and seeking a retreat in the House of Lords. On the 22d of February, General Conway moved for "an address to the King, earnestly imploring his Majesty to listen to the humble prayer and advice of his faithful Commons, that the war on the continent of

America might no longer be pursued, for the impracticable purpose of reducing that country to obedience by force." This was strenuously opposed by the new secretary for the American department; and when the House divided, after a long debate, the ministry had still a majority,—but a majority of one only, the numbers being 192 for, and 193 against the motion; so that the pyramidal edifice of ministerial power was now said, by a marvellous and magical inversion, to rest upon its apex. Five days after, the question was revived in a new form, declaring it to be "the opinion of the House, that a farther prosecution of offensive war against America would, under present circumstances, be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies, and tend to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests both of Great Britain and America." To evade an immediate determination upon the question, the attorney-general, Wallace, moved an adjournment, declaring his intention speedily to submit to the consideration of the House, "a bill, enabling his Majesty to conclude a truce with America, and to enter into a negotiation on this ground." The proposition of adjournment was negatived by a majority of 19, the numbers being 234 to 215; and the original motion of General Conway was then carried without a division. The general next moved an address to the King, founded on the precise words of the motion. This was agreed to; and it was resolved that the address should be presented to his Majesty by the whole House, which was accordingly done on the 1st of March: and his Majesty most graciously replied, that, in pursuance of the advice of the House of Commons, he would assuredly take such measures as should appear to him most conducive to the resto-



ration of harmony between Great Britain and her revolted colonies. This answer not being deemed sufficiently explicit, General Conway, on the 4th of March, moved another address to his Majesty, returning him thanks for his gracious assurances, and affirming, that nothing could so essentially promote the great objects of his Majesty's paternal care, as the measures his faithful Commons had humbly, though earnestly, recommended to his Majesty. This was agreed to *nem. con.*; and, by a second motion, it was resolved, "that the House will consider as enemies to his Majesty and the country all those who should advise a prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America." On the succeeding day, the attorney-general moved for leave to bring in a bill to enable his Majesty to conclude a truce or peace with the revolted colonies in America. No serious opposition was made to this bill, but it was treated with indifference, and Mr. Fox declared it to be only deserving of contempt.

Ministers not having indicated an intention to resign, it was thought necessary to move a direct vote of censure upon them, at the close of a series of resolutions brought forward by Lord John Cavendish, on the 8th of March, importing, "that the chief cause of all the national misfortunes is want of foresight and ability in his Majesty's ministers." The motion was seconded by Mr. Powys, who remarked, that the noble lord at the head of affairs had declared, that whenever Parliament should withdraw its confidence from him, he would resign. That period was now come. The confidence of Parliament was now withdrawn. It was therefore necessary that he should retire from power; and, whenever the happy moment should arrive, in which the noble lord, to the unspeak-

able joy of the nation, should really go to his sovereign to resign his employments, he hoped he would not forget to lay before the King a fair representation of the flourishing state in which he found his Majesty's empire when the government of it was intrusted to his hands, and the ruinous condition in which he was about to leave all that remained of it. After a long debate, the order of the day was moved, and carried by 226 against 216. In the course of a few days, a resolution was moved by Sir John Rous, that the House, taking into consideration the debt incurred, and the losses sustained in the present war, could place no further confidence in the ministers, who had the direction of public affairs. On a division, the numbers were 227 for, and 236 against the motion. Four days after this, (March the 19th,) the Earl of Surry had proposed to move a resolution of similar import to that of Sir John Rous; but when his lordship was about to rise, Lord North addressed himself to the speaker, and said, that as he understood the object of the noble lord's motion to be the removal of ministers, he wished to prevent the necessity of giving the House further trouble, by an explicit declaration, that his Majesty had come to a determination to make an entire change of administration: and he and his colleagues only retained their official situations till other ministers were appointed to occupy their places. Upon this Lord Surry consented to wave his motion; and in nine days after, the new arrangement was announced. The cabinet, formed under the auspices of the Marquis of Rockingham, and including himself as first commissioner of the treasury, was composed of the Earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox, who were appointed secretaries of state; Lord Camden, president of the council; Duke of Grafton, privy seal;

Lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the exchequer; Admiral Keppel, who was also created a viscount, first commissioner of the admiralty; General Conway, commander in chief of the forces; Duke of Richmond, master general of the ordnance; Lord Thurlow, who was continued in his office of lord high chancellor; and Mr. Dunning, created Baron Ashburton, and made chancellor of the dutchy of Lancaster. The Duke of Portland succeeded Lord Carlisle as lord-lieutenant of Ireland; Mr. Burke was constituted paymaster of the forces; and Colonel Barré, treasurer of the navy.

The first business of national importance, brought forward after the appointment of the new ministry, was the repeal of an act passed in the reign of George the First, for securing the dependency of Ireland, against which the loudest and justest clamours had been raised in that country. This repeal, which passed both Houses without opposition, was properly understood as a virtual renunciation of the claim of legislating for Ireland. The power of suppressing or altering bills in the privy council, and the perpetual mutiny bill, were the other grievances of which the Irish had made some very urgent complaints. As these points lay between the Parliament of Ireland and the King, they were assured, by the lord-lieutenant, of his Majesty's gracious intentions to give his assent to acts for abolishing the obnoxious power above mentioned, and for limiting the duration of the mutiny act to the term of two years. The Irish Parliament and the whole nation were so highly gratified with these concessions, that a vote of the House of Commons in that kingdom passed, unanimously, for raising 20,000 seamen for the service of the British navy.



While these steps were judiciously taken to soothe the discontents and remove the jealousies of the people of Ireland, the new administration were not inattentive to the means of acquiring popularity at home. Bills for disabling revenue officers from voting at elections, and excluding contractors from the House of Commons, which had been repeatedly negatived in the course of a few years, were now revived and passed with approbation and applause. Mr. Burke's reform bill was also brought forward a third time, in consequence of a message from the King, recommending an effectual plan of economy throughout all the branches of the public expenditure. By this bill, which now passed, though not without some warm opposition in the House of Lords, principally from the lord-chancellor, the board of trade, the board of works, and the great wardrobe were abolished, together with the office of American secretary of state, and many sinecure appointments.

On the 3d of May, after a long debate, it was resolved by the House of Commons, "that all the declarations, orders, and resolutions of that House respecting the election of John Wilkes, Esq. be expunged from the journals of the House, as subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors in the kingdom." By the people, however, the case of the Middlesex election was now regarded with nearly as much indifference as that of any other elective decision.

Just afterwards, a subject of infinitely higher importance, was brought under the notice of the House, in consequence of a motion made by Mr. William Pitt, for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the state of the representation of the people in Parliament. The motion was warmly supported by

Sir George Saville, and by Mr. Fox, who allowed the House of Commons to be a virtual representation of the people, yet this, he observed, was very different from, and far inferior to, a real one. The more distinguished opponents of the motion were Mr. Dundas, lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Powys, and Mr. Thomas Pitt, the proprietor of the borough of Old Sarum. On a division, Mr. Pitt's motion was negatived only by 161 against 141.

So far the new ministry, though composed of some dissonant and jarring principles, had conducted public affairs with the appearance of perfect harmony; but the death of the Marquis of Rockingham on the 1st of July, threw their whole system into the utmost disorder. On the day succeeding his decease, the Earl of Shelburne was declared first lord of the treasury. The acceptance of this high and pre-eminent office, without any previous communication with his colleagues, was considered by the Rockingham party as equivalent to a declaration of political hostility. Mr. Fox immediately resigned the seals as secretary of the northern department; Lord John Cavendish his office as chancellor of the exchequer; the Duke of Portland his government of Ireland; a few others their seats at the boards of treasury and admiralty; and Mr. Burke his post of paymaster of the army. In consequence of their resignations, the seals of the southern department were given to the Earl of Grantham, and of the northern to Mr. Thomas Townshend, late secretary at war: Sir George Yonge succeeded Mr. Townshend: Colonel Barré was made paymaster of the forces; and Mr. Dundas was appointed in his room treasurer of the navy: Lord Temple succeeded the Duke of Portland in the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland; and Mr. William Pitt was,



at the early age of 23, constituted chancellor of the exchequer.

The session closed on the 11th of July, when the speech from the throne, in addition to the usual topics, contained the welcome declaration, that nothing could be more repugnant to his Majesty's feelings, than the long continuance of so complicated a war; and that his ardent desire of peace had induced him to take every measure which promised the speediest accomplishment of his wishes. The success of those measures will be described after a short sketch of the naval and military events of the year.

Intelligence arrived early in the spring that General Murray, governor of Minorca, had been compelled, after a long and vigorous resistance of 171 days, to surrender that island to the arms of his Catholic Majesty, on the 8th of February. The island of Nevis, in the West Indies, about the same time surrendered to the Marquis de Bouillé and the Count de Grasse; by whom very liberal terms were granted to the inhabitants. Eight thousand troops, with a formidable train of artillery, were then landed on the important island of St. Christopher. Sir Samuel Hood, who commanded the British fleet on that station, made great efforts for its relief; and, notwithstanding his inferiority of force, he, in three successive encounters with De Grasse, obtained each time the advantage, and at length, by a dexterous manœuvre, gained possession of the enemy's anchorage at Basseterre Road. Admiral Hood then landed a considerable detachment of troops from Antigua under General Prescott. General Frazer, however, the commanding officer, was obliged to surrender the island on capitulation, after a siege of five weeks, on the 12th of February. In the same month, Demerara, Essequibo, and Mont-



serrat, were captured by the French; the Bahamas were also reduced by a considerable force under Don Manuel de Cigagal, governor of the Havannah, to the obedience of the crown of Spain. On the 19th of February Admiral Rodney arrived in the West Indies with a strong reinforcement of ships from England, and resumed the command. Great preparations were now making, both by the French and Spaniards, for the invasion of Jamaica; and as the combined force of these nations amounted to above sixty sail of the line, had a junction been effected, the island must have been lost. Sir George Rodney's first object was to intercept a large convoy of troops, provisions, &c. expected from Europe, but in this he was disappointed; the enemy found means to escape his vigilance, by making the island of Desseada to the northward, and keeping close in shore under the high land of Guadaloupe and Dominique, and arrived safe at Fort-royal on the 21st of March. It was the intention of De Grasse to proceed to Hispaniola, and join the Spanish admiral, Don Solano, who was awaiting his arrival, to make, in conjunction, the pre-concerted attack on Jamaica. On the 8th of April, at day-break, the French fleet left the harbour of Fort-royal: Admiral Rodney instantly made the signal for a general chase; and, early the next morning, he came up with the enemy under Dominique, where the van of the English engaged the rear of the French: the continued calms, however, prevented a general or close action. In the morning of the 11th a fresh gale sprang up; the chase was renewed; and, towards evening, the headmost ships of the van gained so much on one or two of the enemy's ships, damaged in the late action, that De Grasse thought it necessary to bear down for the

purpose of protecting them. Sir George Rodney, who had eagerly watched and waited for this opportunity, now manœuvred the fleet with such skill, as to gain the windward of the enemy during the night, and entirely to prevent their retreat. At seven in the morning of the 12th the two fleets, ranged in lines directly opposite, engaged with the greatest fury. Rodney's fleet amounted to thirty-six sail of the line; that of De Grasse only to thirty-four, but higher rates, with superior weight of metal. The French ships being crowded with men, the carnage was prodigious; but no visible impression was made, or material advantage gained, till about noon, when Sir George Rodney in the *Formidable*, followed by his seconds the *Namur* and the *Duke*, successfully broke through the enemy's line, about three ships short of the centre, where the Count de Grasse commanded in the *Ville de Paris*. Promptly supported by the remainder of his division, Sir George wore round close upon the enemy, and actually separated their line, placing the central ships of the French between two fires. This manœuvre proved decisive. The French, however, continued to fight with the utmost bravery, and the battle lasted till sun-set. The *Cæsar* was the first ship which struck her colours, having lost her captain, and being reduced to a wreck by her adversary's fire. Soon afterwards she blew up, and all her crew perished. The *Glorieux*, the *Hector*, the *Ardent*, followed the example of the *Cæsar*; and the *Diadem* went down by a single broadside. The *Ville de Paris* still held out, though reduced to a perfect wreck, till having three men only left alive and unhurt on the upper deck, she struck to Admiral Hood, in the *Barfleur*, just at sun-set. Night only closed the action: the shattered



remains of the French fleet crowded all the sail they could make for Cape François, and in the morning were out of sight. Sir Samuel Hood being detached to pursue them, came up with five sail off Porto Rico, and captured the Jason and Caton ships of the line, and two frigates; the third with difficulty clearing the Mona passage. This was justly considered as one of the most glorious and decisive victories ever obtained by the naval prowess of Britain. The number of men slain in this action, and in that of the 9th, on the part of the French, is estimated at 3000 men, and the wounded were nearly double; so that, taking the prisoners on board the captured ships also into the computation, the French must have sustained a loss of 10,000 or 12,000 men. Their fleet had on board the land forces intended for the Jamaica expedition; and the whole train of artillery, with thirty-six chests of money destined for the use and subsistence of the troops, were found on board the Ville de Paris, and the other captured ships. The designs of the confederated powers were thus completely frustrated, whilst the loss of men, including killed and wounded, on the part of the English, did not exceed 1100. Sir George Bridges Rodney was created a peer of Great Britain, by the title of Baron Rodney, of Rodney Stoke in the county of Somerset, and a perpetual annuity of 2000*l.* was annexed to the title. A motion, overruled in the preceding session of Parliament, but intended to be revived by the present ministry, for an inquiry into the conduct of the naval and military commanders at St. Eustatia, was now lost sight of; and the admiral received the unanimous thanks of both Houses for his eminent services.

North America afforded no military transaction of any consequence during this period. But the cam-



paign in Europe was rendered memorable by an event which reflected no less honour on the British arms than Rodney's exploit in the West Indies. This was General Elliot's defence of Gibraltar against the last desperate and unparalleled efforts of the Spanish monarchy. The Duke de Crillon, conqueror of Minorca, was now appointed to conduct the siege; a number of floating batteries were constructed upon a model, which, it was imagined, would secure them from being either sunk or fired, and the preparations, in other respects, were enormous. Above eighty gun-boats and bomb-ketches were to second the operations of the floating batteries, with a multitude of frigates and smaller vessels, while the combined fleets, amounting to fifty sail of the line, were to cover and support the attack. Some princes of the blood and many of the French nobility had repaired to the Spanish camp, to witness the inevitable fall of the fortress; and, on the 13th of September, when the rock was to be crumbled into dust, the surrounding hills were covered with people, as though all Spain were assembled to behold the spectacle. The day closed in a manner widely different from their expectations: the floating batteries were all consumed by the prodigious and unintermitted showers of red-hot balls that issued from the garrison; and above 1500 of the Spaniards were supposed to have perished in this fiery conflict. To complete the triumph of the English, Lord Howe soon after performed the signal and perilous service of relieving Gibraltar, in the very face of the enemy, and under such circumstances of inferiority in force, as not only fully to support, but highly to exalt, the naval renown of his country. The governor, General Elliot, for his gallant and heroic defence, was raised to the peerage by the title of Baron Heath-

field, and a pension annexed to the title, equal in amount to that which had been granted to Sir George Rodney. This was the last affair of importance during the continuance of the war in Europe; and thus the military career of Britain, after her repeated misfortunes, terminated with great splendour.

All the belligerent powers were now inclined to listen to overtures of pacification. The independence of America being virtually recognised by England, and a resolution against offensive operations having passed the House of Commons, the war with the colonies, during the continuance of which the national debt of the mother country had been increased 100,000,000*l.*, was in fact at an end. The original purpose of France being accomplished, she could have no motive to persevere in a contest, the expense of which was enormous, and the farther success uncertain. Spain, after extraordinary exertions, having failed in both her grand objects, the recovery of Gibraltar and the conquest of Jamaica, had little reason to flatter herself that her future efforts would be more effectual than the past; and Holland would neither have the inclination nor the ability to continue the war alone. During the negotiation with France and Spain, protracted chiefly in consequence of the demand in which Spain for some time persisted of the cession of Gibraltar, provisional articles between Great Britain and America were signed on the 30th of November, by which the thirteen provinces were declared free and independent states; and, by a boundary line drawn much in their favour, the country southward of the lakes on both sides of the Ohio, and eastward of the Mississippi, was ceded to them, with a full participation of the fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, and the gulf of St. Lawrence.



In return, the congress engaged to *recommend* to the several states to provide for the restitution of the confiscated estates of the loyalists; but the recommendation eventually proved nugatory and useless; and this unfortunate portion of his Majesty's subjects migrated in great numbers to the wilds of Nova Scotia and the Bahamas.

Parliament was opened on the 5th of December, with a speech from the throne, in which the King deplored the dismemberment of the empire, which had become a matter both of policy and prudence; but testified a hope that religion, language, interest, and affection, would yet prove a permanent tie of union between the two countries. Addresses were voted in both Houses without a division; but some severe remarks having been made in the House of Peers on the inconsistency of the minister, who had at a former period so strongly opposed the recognition of American independence, his lordship declared that he had exerted every effort to preserve America to this country; that he had not voluntarily yielded up this independency—he had merely submitted to the controlling power of necessity and fate. “It was not I,” said he, “that made this cession—it was the evil star of Britain—it was the blunders of a former administration—it was the power of revolted subjects, and the mighty arms of the house of Bourbon.”

As it was not publicly known, whether the acknowledgment of independency was absolute or conditional, and as Lord Shelburne declined to communicate any particulars of a negotiation which was actually pending, Mr. Fox moved, in the Commons, an address to the King, to lay before the House copies of such parts of the provisional articles as related to the same. This, however, was opposed as inexpedient and im-



proper; and the motion was negatived by 219 against 46. On the 23d of December, the Parliament, after voting 100,000 seamen and marines for the service of the ensuing year, adjourned to the 21st of January, 1783; the day preceding which, preliminary articles of peace were signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain, and were laid before the two Houses on the 17th of February. By this treaty, Great Britain guaranteed to France the island of Tobago, and restored that of St. Lucia; also the settlements of Goree and Senegal, in Africa; and Pondicherry, with other conquests, in the east. France, on her part, agreed to restore all her conquests in the West Indies, except Tobago. His Catholic Majesty was allowed to retain Minorca and West Florida, East Florida being also ceded in exchange for the Bahamas, which the governor of the Havannah had taken in the beginning of the last year. The demands of the Dutch, not only to have their settlements restored without giving any thing in return, but to be indemnified for the losses and expenses of the war, impeded for the present the conclusion of the treaty with those states. An address of thanks and approbation was carried in the Lords by a majority of 72 to 59; but, in the Lower House, an amendment, withholding such approbation, yet assuring his Majesty of their firm determination to adhere to the several articles, for which the public faith had been pledged, was supported by the combined adherents of Lord North and Mr. Fox, who seemed to forget all past animosities in a sudden league of interest and policy. The latter, after reprobating the peace as the most disastrous and humiliating that had ever disgraced any country, said, he had been accused of having formed an union with the noble lord whose principles he had opposed for several

years of his life; but the grounds of their opposition were removed, and he did not conceive it to be honourable to keep up animosities for ever. He was happy at all times to have a proper opportunity to bury his resentments, and it was the wish of his heart that his friendships should never die. The American war was the source of his disagreement with the noble lord; and that cause of enmity being now no more, it was wise and fit to put an end to the ill-will, the animosity, the feuds, and the rancour, which it engendered. It was a satisfaction to him to apply the appellation of friend to the noble lord; he had found him honourable as an adversary, and he had no doubt of his openness and sincerity as a friend. This declaration was indignantly received by a considerable part of the House. Mr. Powys said, "this was the age of strange confederacies. The world had seen great and arbitrary despots stand forth as the protectors of an infant republic—France and Spain had combined to establish the rising liberties of America. The House now surveyed the counterpart of this picture—a monstrous coalition had taken place between a noble lord and an illustrious commoner—the lofty assertor of the prerogative had joined in alliance with the worshippers of the majesty of the people." On a division, the amendment was carried, by 224 against 208 voices.

The advantages and disadvantages of the peace, were repeatedly discussed in Parliament, with much ability, by the leaders of the contending parties; but on every renewed debate, the opposition evidently gained ground. At length, on the 21st of February, Lord John Cavendish, by moving the following resolution, among others, in a very full House, brought the strength of the parties to a final issue: "That



the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain by the provisional treaty, and the preliminary articles, are greater than they were entitled to, either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength." A vehement debate arose on this resolution. Lord North expressed his amazement at the reflections which had been thrown out against him. He did not repent of his conduct while a minister; conscious of his own innocence, he bade defiance to censure or punishment. Proud as he was of the coalition to which he had been invited, it should be understood that he was not disposed to make any sacrifice of his public principles. He dreaded no accusation, and he dared his enemies, whatever might be their abilities, their influence, and their character, to be decisive, and to proceed against him. The question was carried against the ministry by 207 to 190.

It was now obvious that some change in administration must take place, and the House of Commons adjourned from time to time, with the view of forwarding a new arrangement. The coalition, confident of their strength, were determined to enter into power upon such terms only as would leave them at perfect liberty to act for themselves, without restraint or control, and the ministry were disposed to form an administration that would admit as few as possible of their adversaries, for which purpose some fruitless attempts were made to disunite the members of the new association. Conferences with the King were repeatedly held on the subject of a change of ministers, and were as repeatedly unsuccessful. From these ineffectual endeavours to accommodate party views, the business of the nation was suspended, and more than a month passed in a kind of ministerial



interregnum. The want of an efficient government could be at no time more severely felt than at this. At home the disembodiment of the militia, the discharge of seamen, the reduction of soldiers, the neglect of giving them their pay, and the spirit of turbulence natural to men accustomed to arms, contributed to fill Portsmouth and Plymouth with tumult and confusion, and spread mutinies and riots all over the kingdom. But these were not the only matters that called for the attention of government: our negotiations with foreign powers were not brought to an end. No definitive treaty was concluded with France and Spain. No commercial alliance was adjusted with America, and the East India Company required the immediate aid of Parliament both with regard to its foreign and domestic concerns.

Such was the state of public affairs, when Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, moved, on the 24th of March, an address to the King, "that he would be graciously pleased to take into consideration the distracted and unsettled state of the empire, and condescend to a compliance with the wishes of this House, by forming an administration entitled to the confidence of his people." This was unanimously carried, and presented to the King, who replied, that it was his earnest desire to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful Commons. This answer not being deemed sufficiently explicit, Lord Surrey moved another address, assuring his Majesty that all delays in a matter of this moment have an inevitable tendency to weaken the authority of his government, and most humbly entreating his Majesty that he will take such measures towards this object as may quiet the anxiety and apprehension of his faithful subjects. Mr. Pitt, however, declaring that

he had resigned his office of chancellor of the exchequer, and that any resolution or address relative to a new arrangement of administration was unnecessary, Lord Surrey consented to withdraw his motion.

In consequence of this resignation, the Duke of Portland was placed at the head of the treasury; Lord John Cavendish was re-appointed chancellor of the exchequer; Lord North and Mr. Fox were nominated joint secretaries of state, the first for the home, the latter for the foreign department; Lord Keppel, who had recently resigned on account of his disapprobation of the peace, was again placed at the head of the admiralty; Lord Stormont was created president of the council; Lord Carlisle was advanced to the post of lord privy-seal; the great seal was put into commission, the Chief Justice Loughborough, so distinguished for political versatility, "who could change and change and yet go on," being declared first lord commissioner; the Earl of Northington was appointed to the government of Ireland; Viscount Townshend was made master-general of the ordnance; Lord Sandwich ranger of the parks; and Mr. Burke reinstated in his former post of paymaster of the forces.

Of the seven cabinet ministers, the majority were of the old whig or Rockingham party, and occupied the most important posts; Lords Stormont, North, and Carlisle, contenting themselves rather with a participation of honours and emoluments, than of power: notwithstanding, therefore, the admission of those tory lords into the ministry, it could not but be acknowledged, as to all the grand purposes of government, a whig administration: more especially when the ability, the vigour, and the decision of its efficient leader were duly estimated. A junction of persons,



however, whose principles were radically hostile, and which no effort of art, or length of time, could assimilate, was not a measure likely to conciliate universal esteem; and though the coalition were enabled to support successfully the most violent contest for power that perhaps is to be found in the political history of this country, and ultimately to wrest the government from their antagonists, yet it operated to diminish public confidence in their measures; and therefore, while it obtained them a complete conquest, it deprived them of the more solid advantages of victory.

Amongst the earliest measures of the new ministry was the passing of a bill, already pending, for the purpose of preventing any writs of error or appeal from the kingdom of Ireland from being received by any of his Majesty's courts in Great Britain, and of renouncing, in express terms, the legislative authority of the British Parliament in relation to Ireland. Mr. Fox lost no time in attempting to remove every obstacle which opposed the opening an immediate intercourse with America; and early in April moved for liberty to bring in a "bill for preventing any manifesto, certificate, or other document being required from any ships belonging to the United States of America, arriving from thence at any port of this kingdom; or upon entering or clearing out from any port of this kingdom, for any port within the United States." The bill, in its original shape, was supposed to go too far, by extending an indulgence that might be made subservient to the practice of smuggling; an amendment was therefore adopted, limiting for a certain time the powers to be vested in the King, after which it was carried through the Commons, and with some slight opposition passed the Lords.



The very critical situation of our affairs in the east next engaged the attention of Parliament. The House of Commons had appointed a select committee to examine into the state of the British dominions in India. In the prosecution of this important inquiry, it was discovered that the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, had been perverted to purposes of speculation, plunder, and oppression, and that corruption, fraud, and injustice, pervaded the company's government in India. In consequence of these discoveries, a general unity of opinion prevailed amongst public men on the immediate necessity of taking some effectual step, to rescue the British name from disgrace, to restore to the natives the pure administration of mild and equal laws, and to secure and improve our territorial possessions in India. With this view, the lord advocate for Scotland introduced a bill into the House of Commons. This gentleman had, by long and laborious investigation, made himself completely master of the subject. His system had for its object the establishment of a government in India, better adapted to the dispositions, habits, and prejudices of the inhabitants, than any hitherto attempted. But as this bill was afterwards superseded by one from another quarter, more extensive in its views, it is here unnecessary to detail its regulations. In a few days after the disclosure of the defects and abuses of Indian government, a bill was introduced by Sir Henry Fletcher, "for suspending the payments of the company now due to the royal exchequer, and for enabling them to borrow the sum of 300,000*l.* for their farther relief." Lord John Cavendish declared this bill to be only a branch of a larger plan; and that it was brought forward separately, in order to answer an exigency which did not admit of

delay. His lordship viewed the territorial acquisitions of the company as a fruitful source of grievance, and observed that it would have been more for their advantage, had they confined themselves to the character of merchants. As these acquisitions, however, had been made, they must, he said, be preserved, and it was his opinion that the relief necessary to the company should be granted. In the Upper House, Lord Fitzwilliam affirmed, that, unless the bill passed, their bankruptcy would be inevitable. The expenditure of their settlements had far exceeded their revenue; bills had been drawn upon them which they were unable to answer without a temporary supply, so that the existence of the company depended upon the success of the bill; which accordingly passed both Houses with little opposition.

About this period intelligence was received of the conclusion of peace with the Mahrattas. This event, which opened a prospect of a favourable change to our affairs in the east, was soon followed by the death of Hyder Ally, a man, eminently distinguished for an enterprising spirit, resources, and vigour of mind; who entertained the most rooted aversion to the English name; and who by his power, courage, and military skill, had long proved himself the most daring and formidable of all the company's enemies.

On the 16th of April the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward his plan for raising 12,000,000*l.* by loan, which underwent much censure on account of the high premium it speedily bore. The money borrowed was funded at three per cent. at the rate of 150*l.* stock, for every 100*l.* sterling; so that an artificial capital of 6,000,000*l.* was created above the sum actually paid into the exchequer.

The former motion of Mr. Pitt for an inquiry into

the state of the representation having been negatived, he brought forward, the 7th of May, a specific plan for adding 100 members to the counties, and abolishing a proportionable number of the burgage-tenure, and other small boroughs. The revival of this important subject, which had deeply agitated the public mind, produced an animated debate; in the course of which Lord North declared, that while some, with Lear, demanded an hundred knights, and others, with Goneril, were satisfied with fifty, he, with Regan, exclaimed, No, not one. His lordship denied that the House of Commons had not its full and proper weight in the scale of government; his political life was a proof that it had. It was to them he was indebted for his rise, and they had pulled him down. Mr. Fox, whose opinion on this great question was totally irreconcilable with that of his brother secretary, stated, that in his opinion the constitution required innovation and renovation: its nature exposed it to change; and its beauty did not consist in theory but in practice. The lord advocate for Scotland, who had distinguished himself by his zeal for high prerogative, became, on this occasion, a convert to the doctrine of reform, and asserted his entire approbation of Mr. Pitt's resolutions. This unexpected support effected a cordial and lasting union between those two celebrated characters: Mr. Pitt's motion was, however, lost by a majority of 293 to 149. A motion for shortening the duration of parliaments, brought forward by Alderman Sawbridge on the 16th of May, was also lost by 123 to 56.

In a committee on a bill for regulating certain offices in the exchequer, Lord John Cavendish proposed that after the interest of the present auditors and tellers of the exchequer, and the clerk of the



pells, should expire, the salaries of them should be fixed and certain; and a rate was adopted, according to which, on an average of peace and war, they would be reduced nearly one half.

A bill for regulating the trade of the African Company having been introduced towards the close of the session, with a clause prohibiting the officers of the company from exporting negroes, the Quakers embraced the occasion to petition the House of Commons, that the clause in question might be extended to all persons whatsoever; professing themselves deeply affected with the consideration of the rapine, oppression, and blood, attending this traffic. "Under the countenance of the laws of this country," the petitioners remark, "many thousands of these our fellow-creatures, entitled to the natural rights of mankind, are held as personal property in cruel bondage. Your petitioners regret that a nation professing the Christian faith should so far counteract the principles of humanity and justice." This petition strongly excited the attention of the public, and laid the foundation of the subsequent efforts to effect a total abolition of this commerce.

The only remaining subject of importance which engaged the attention of Parliament, was a message from the King to both Houses, requiring a separate establishment for the Prince of Wales, who was now arrived at the age of maturity. His Majesty agreed to allow to the heir-apparent 50,000*l.* a-year out of the civil list; but in consideration that the revenue so reduced could not bear any further burden, Parliament granted to the King an aid of 60,000*l.* to equip the Prince in a manner suited to his dignity.

Parliament was prorogued on the 16th of July, by a speech in which the King intimated his intention of

calling them together at an early period, to resume the consideration of the affairs of India.

In the course of the summer few material events occurred deserving of particular notice. The King, by virtue of an act passed for that purpose, issued an order in council, limiting the commerce between the continent of America and the British West India islands, to ships British built. This was conformable to the grand principle on which the act of navigation was originally founded; and though this restriction gave extreme offence to the inhabitants of the United States, they had certainly no just reason to complain, as they could have no possible right to claim the advantages of dependence and independence at one and the same time.

On the 3d of September the definitive treaties of peace with France, Spain, and America, were with some alteration signed; and also preliminaries of peace with the States General, by which all the conquests of England were restored, except the town of Négapatam on the coast of Coromandel, which their High Mightinesses were at last most reluctantly compelled to cede. About this time, an ambassador from the United States of America, Mr. Adams, arrived in London. On his first audience at St. James's, the King, addressing Mr. Adams with much courtesy, said, that he had been the last man in his kingdom who had assented to the recognition of American independence; but, now it was actually established, he would be the last man in the kingdom to sanction a violation of it.

The unexpected and uncommon events connected with the history of the ensuing session require, for their better elucidation, a brief sketch of the state of parties at the convening of Parliament. The coali-

tion administration was universally acknowledged to be able, powerful, and active; it embraced a happy combination of native genius and matured experience, of spirited adventure and sagacious hesitation; and as these qualities were not unattended with a due proportion of weight, connexion, and interest, their friends thought that such an administration comprised in it all that was requisite to heal the wounds, restore the prosperity, and recover the honour of Britain. But the same considerations that inspired their advocates with hope, were regarded by their opponents as the fruitful sources of terror and misfortune. Their ability would be found only an ability to plan the destruction of their country; their influence an influence that would carry the worst measures as easily as the best; and their activity a restless enemy, against which, precaution and vigilance could be no protection. Such was in general the language of the opponents of administration. One class, who thought impropriety of private conduct incompatible with public virtue, or who conceived that ample property was the most eligible security for ministerial rectitude, were by no means pleased to see Mr. Fox placed in so conspicuous a station. Another, and that a very numerous one, had contracted such an extreme aversion to Lord North's administration, that they could never be reconciled to his lordship's restoration to power, on any terms. A third party, of tory principles, entertained a rooted dislike of administration, because, in their opinion, they had daringly trenched on the sacred prerogative of majesty, and had "taken the closet of the Sovereign by storm." From this extreme difference of opinion between the adverse parties on the merits and demerits of administration, something may be collected of the spirit and



views of each at the period of convening Parliament, which took place so early as the 11th of November, when his Majesty, after noticing the conclusion of peace with France, Spain, and America, and the ratification of the preliminary articles with the States General, stated that the utmost exertions of their wisdom would be required to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our Indian possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces. The address passed without opposition.

The embarrassments of the East India Company requiring immediate attention, Mr. Fox, on the 18th of November, moved for leave to bring in a bill for vesting their affairs in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietary and the public. This celebrated bill proposed to take at once, from the directors and proprietors, the entire administration both of their territorial and commercial affairs; and to vest the management and direction of them in the hands of seven commissioners named in the bill, and irremovable by the crown, except in consequence of an address of either House of Parliament. These were Earl Fitzwilliam, president of the board; Viscount Lewisham, the Right Hon. Frederic Montague, the Hon. George Augustus North, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Sir Henry Fletcher, baronets; and Robert Gregory, Esq., who, it was remarked, were divided upon the model and in the same proportion as the members of the cabinet. They were to be assisted by a subordinate board of nine directors, to be named, in the first instance, by Parliament, and afterwards chosen by the proprietors. The bill empowered these commissioners and directors to enter immediately into possession of all lands,

tenements, books, records, vessels, goods, merchandize, and securities, in trust for the company. They were required to come to a decision upon every question within a limited time, or to assign a specific reason for delay. They were never to vote by ballot, and they were almost in all cases to enter upon their journals the reasons of their vote. They were to submit, once in every six months, an exact state of their accounts to the court of proprietors, and at the beginning of every session to present a statement of their affairs to both Houses of Parliament. This act was to continue in force four years, that is, till the year after the next general election, and it was accompanied by a second bill for the future government of the British territories in Hindoostan. It took from the governor-general all power of acting independently of his council. It declared every existing British power in India incompetent to the acquisition or exchange of any territory in behalf of the company; to the acceding to any treaty of partition; to the hiring out the company's troops; to the appointment to office of any person removed for misdemeanor; and to the hiring out any property to any civil servant of the company. It prohibited all monopolies; and also declared every illegal present recoverable by any person for his own sole benefit. It employed effectual means to secure the Zemindars, or native landholders, in the possession of their respective inheritances, and to preclude all vexatious and usurious claims that might be made upon them; mortgages were therefore prohibited, and doubtful claims subjected to the examination of the commissioners.

It is scarcely possible to conceive the sensation excited in the House of Commons by the disclosure of

this system. It was espoused with zeal and enthusiasm by the friends of the minister; and attacked by his opponents with all the vehemence of indignation, and all the energy of invective. It was on one side of the House extolled as a masterpiece of genius, virtue, and ability; while on the other it was reprobated as a deep and dangerous design, fraught with mischief and ruin. Mr. Pitt distinguished himself on this occasion as a formidable adversary of the minister. He acknowledged, "that India indeed wanted a reform, but not such a reform as this: it wanted a constitutional alteration, and not a tyrannical one, that broke through every principle of equity and justice. By the bill before the House an attack was made on the most solemn charters: it pointed a fatal blow against the faith and integrity of Parliament: it broke through every tie by which man was bound to man. The principle of this bill once established, what security had the other public companies of the kingdom? What security had the Bank of England? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations? Or, indeed, what assurance could we have for the great charter itself, the foundation of all our liberties? It would be folly in the extreme to suppose that the principle, once admitted, would operate only on the present occasion. Good principles might sleep, but bad ones never. It was the curse of society, that when a bad principle was once established, bad men would always be found to give it its full effect. The bill under consideration included a confiscation of the property, and a disfranchisement of the members of the East India Company; all the several articles of whose effects were transferred by violence to strangers. Imagination was at a loss to guess at the most insignificant trifle



that had escaped the harpy jaws of a ravenous coalition. The power was pretended, indeed, to be given in trust for the benefit of the proprietors ; but in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal ? To the proprietors ? No ;—to the majority of either House of Parliament, which the most contemptible minister could not fail to secure, with the patronage of above 2,000,000*l.* sterling given by this bill. The influence which would accrue from this bill—a new, enormous, and unexampled influence,—was indeed in the highest degree alarming. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by Parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority the patronage and treasures of India. The right honourable mover had acknowledged himself to be a man of ambition, and it now appeared that he was prepared to sacrifice the King, the Parliament, and the people, at the shrine of his ambition. He desired to elevate his present connexions to a situation in which no political convulsions, and no variations of power, might be able to destroy their importance, and terminate their ascendancy.” These and similar arguments were also ably enforced by the lord advocate, Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Grenville, &c. On the other hand, Mr. Fox vindicated the bill with great ability. To the charge of violating the company’s charters, he replied, that they had been again and again altered to a great extent. He had been warned by his opponents against palliatives and half-measures ; and he should be glad to hear how it was possible to adapt a new system by parliamentary authority, without striking at those charters, which entitled the company to continue the old one. He had adverted to the plea of necessity ; and it was objected to him that necessity was the creed of slaves,

He would tell those objectors, that it was also the creed of freemen. Every syllable that had been uttered respecting the intangibility of claims made venerable by prescription and parchments, was a battery against the main pillars of the British constitution. "I am also," continued Mr. Fox, "charged with increasing the influence, and giving an immense accession of power to the crown: but certainly this bill as little augments the influence of the crown, as any measure that can be devised for the government of India, with the slightest promise of success. The very genius of influence consists in hope or fear; fear of losing what we have, or hope of gaining more. Make the commissioners removeable at will, and you set all the little passions of human nature afloat. Invest them with power upon the same tenure as the British judges hold their station, removeable upon delinquency, punishable upon guilt, but fearless of danger if they discharge their trust, and they will be liable to no seducement, and will execute their functions with glory to themselves, and for the common good of the country and mankind. This bill presumes the possibility of bad administration, for every word in it breathes suspicion. It supposes that men are but men; it confides in no integrity; it trusts to no character. It annexes responsibility, not only to every action, but even to the inaction of the powers it has created. I will risk my all upon the excellence of this bill. I will risk upon it whatever is most dear to me, whatever men most value, the character of integrity, of talents, of honour, of present reputation, and future fame: these will I stake upon the constitutional safety, the enlarged policy, the equity and wisdom of the measure. Whatever, therefore, may be the fate of its authors, I have no fear that it will produce to this

country every blessing of commerce and revenue ; and by extending a generous and humane government over those millions whom the inscrutable dispensations of Providence have placed under us in the remotest regions of the earth, it will consecrate the name of England among the noblest of nations."

While the bill was pending in the Commons, a petition was presented by the East India Company, representing the measure as subversive of their charter, and operating as a confiscation of their property without charging against them any specific delinquency ; without trial ; without conviction ; a proceeding contrary to the most sacred privileges of British subjects ; and praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. The city of London also presented a strong petition to the same effect ; but the bill was carried with uncommon rapidity through all its stages in the Commons by decisive majorities, the division, on the second reading, being 217 to 103 voices.

On the 9th of December Mr. Fox, attended by a numerous train of members, presented the bill at the bar of the Lords. On this occasion, Earl Temple declared, that he was happy to embrace the first opportunity of entering his protest against so infamous a bill ; against a stretch of power so truly alarming, and that went near to seize upon the most inestimable part of our constitution—our chartered rights. Lord Thurlow, on the same side, asserted that, in the first instance, the bill was an atrocious violation of private property, and could only be justified by the strongest necessity ; that if such necessity existed, it must be proved by evidence at the bar of the House, and not by reports from a committee, to which he should pay as much attention as to the romance of Robinson Crusoe. Could Parliament forget that the politics of



this country had involved the company in an extensive and ruinous war? and that while we encountered loss, misfortune, and disgrace in every other part of the globe, this delinquent company had surmounted the most astonishing difficulties in India? Would Parliament forget, that when peace was restored to this unfortunate country, the conquests of this delinquent company were given up to prevent farther sacrifices of our more favourite possessions? The second reading took place on the 15th of December, when counsel was heard at the bar in behalf of the company: and on the 17th it was moved that the bill be rejected. On this occasion Lord Camden said, that, were this bill to pass into a law, we should see the King of England and the King of Bengal contending for superiority in the British Parliament. After a vehement debate, the motion of rejection was carried by 95 against 76 voices.

As the first divisions in the Upper House were favourable to this bill, it will naturally be imagined that such a sudden and remarkable change of sentiment, must have been occasioned by the intervention of some powerful cause, adequate to so extraordinary and unexpected an effect: this event, though not susceptible of legal demonstration, has been sufficiently ascertained to deserve a place in history. On the 11th of December, Earl Temple had a conference with the King, in which, having fully explained his ideas on the nature and tendency of the bill, the Sovereign became at once a complete convert to the views of opposition. In consequence of this change of sentiment, the royal indignation was excited in a very high degree, the Monarch considering himself as having been duped and deceived by his confidential servants, and a card was immediately written,

stating, that "his Majesty allowed Earl Temple to say, that whoever voted for the India bill was not only *not his* friend, but would be considered by him as his enemy. And if these words were not strong enough, Earl Temple might use whatever words he might deem stronger or more to the purpose." An interference of so extraordinary a nature was not likely to pass without animadversion: Mr. William Baker, accordingly, moved the House of Commons, on the very day that the bill was rejected by the Lords, "that it was now necessary to declare, that, to report any opinion, or pretended opinion, of the King upon any bill, or other proceeding depending in either House of Parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was a high crime and misdemeanor." Earl Nugent, father-in-law to Earl Temple, declared, that the resolutions before them went to the utter annihilation of sovereignty. What! said he, were not peers, by their rank and situation, hereditary counsellors of the crown?—Would that House dare to derogate from the high dignity which the constitution had annexed to their station? Every peer, and indeed every commoner, under certain restrictions, had a right to address the sovereign. But the tendency of these resolutions was to make the monarch a kind of prisoner of state, and to shut him up from every species of information unacceptable to the existing administration. Were any relation of his, in a crisis of difficulty and danger, to convey truths to his sovereign of high importance to be known, though at the risk of incurring the utmost punishment which the indignation of that House could inflict, he should consider his conduct not merely as justifiable, but transcendently meritorious, and such as would transmit his name with honour to the latest

posterity. Mr. Pitt treated the motion lightly, and represented it as unworthy the dignity of the House to found any resolutions upon rumours and hearsays. Mr. Fox replied with great eloquence: "I ever stood," said he, "and wish only to stand on public ground: I have too much pride ever to owe any thing to secret influence: I will not even be the minister of a great and free people on any condition derogatory to my honour as a gentleman. It is impossible," continued he, "not to be surprised at the extreme eagerness of the honourable gentleman, Mr. Pitt, about our places. If, however, a change must take place, and a new ministry is to be formed and supported, not by the confidence of this House or the public, but the sole authority of the crown, I, for one, shall not envy the honourable gentleman his situation. From that moment I put in my claim to a monopoly of whig principles. The glorious cause of freedom, of independence, and of the constitution, is no longer his, but mine. In this I have lived, in this I will die. It has borne me up under every aspersion to which my character has been subjected. The resentments of the mean, and the aversion of the great; the rancour of the vindictive, and the subtilty of the base; the dereliction of friends, and the efforts of enemies, have not all diverted me from the line of conduct which I had originally chosen." After an animated debate, Mr. Baker's resolution was carried by a majority of 153 to 80. A dissolution of Parliament being now apprehended, Mr. Erskine moved, immediately after the above resolution, that whoever should prevent, or advise his Majesty to prevent that House from discharging their duty in remedying the abuses which prevailed in the government of the British dominions in the East Indies, should be considered by them as



an enemy to his country. The motion was carried by a great majority.

This contest between the Crown and the Commons presented a novel and interesting scene. Prerogative and privilege at war is one of those alarming events which the wisdom of preceding reigns had taken care to prevent; the Crown, therefore, boldly entering the lists with the Commons, exhibited a conduct without example in the annals of the present royal family. On the other hand, the situation of the Prince was critical, having gone perhaps too far to be able to recede. He had certainly shown much displeasure against his ministers, in a style rather of hostility than of conciliation; and to have submitted to a recantation might have been deemed a signal dishonour. Besides these difficulties, which such a case must at all times have involved, there was one peculiar to the present crisis. The ministers were committed upon their Indian system, and could not, without a total sacrifice of personal independence and the reputation of principle, abandon the scheme. In the mean time the Sovereign had declared himself, in the most peremptory terms, adverse to the measure; and under such circumstances, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to discover a medium to preserve, unwounded, the honour of both. An entire change of administration was therefore determined upon; and, accordingly, at midnight on the 18th of December, a royal message was sent to the secretaries of state, demanding the seals of their several departments, and at the same time directing that they should be delivered to the Sovereign by the under secretaries, as a personal interview would be disagreeable. Early next morning letters of dismissal, signed Temple, were sent to the other members of

the cabinet. In a few days after, Mr. Pitt, then at the age of 24, was declared first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer; the Marquis of Carmarthen and Mr. Thomas Townshend, created Lord Sydney, were nominated secretaries of state; Lord Thurlow was reinstated as lord-chancellor; Earl Gower as president of the council; the Duke of Rutland was constituted lord privy-seal; Lord Howe placed at the head of the admiralty; and the Duke of Richmond of the ordnance. The Earl of Northington was recalled from his government of Ireland, to which Lord Temple, who had retained the seals of secretary only three days, was again appointed to succeed. The Earl of Shelburne was not included in the new arrangement. As this change in the ministry left the majority of the House of Commons in a state of opposition, it was not doubted that a dissolution of Parliament was in contemplation, and on the 22d of December, in a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Erskine moved, "that an address be presented to the King, stating, that alarming reports had gone forth of an intended dissolution of Parliament, and humbly representing to his Majesty, the inconveniences and dangers of a prorogation or dissolution in the present conjuncture; and entreating the Sovereign to hearken to the advice of that House, and not to the secret advice of particular persons who might have private interests of their own, separate from the true interests of the King and people."—This address was carried without a division, and on the 24th was presented to the Sovereign, who returned the following answer: "Gentlemen, it has been my constant object to employ the authority intrusted to me by the constitution to its true and only end, the good of my people; and I am always happy in con-

curring with the wishes and opinions of my faithful Commons. I agree with you in thinking that the support of the public credit and revenue must demand your most earnest and vigilant care. The state of the East Indies is also an object of as much delicacy and importance as can exercise the wisdom and justice of Parliament. I trust you will proceed in these considerations with all convenient speed, after such an adjournment as the present circumstances may seem to require; and I assure you, that I shall not interrupt your meeting by any exercise of my prerogative either of prorogation or dissolution."

In this extraordinary situation of political affairs, the House adjourned for the usual Christmas recess to the 12th of January, 1784; on which day the committee on the state of the nation was resumed, and several resolutions were brought forward by Mr. Fox, and agreed to by the House, prohibiting the lords of the treasury from assenting to the acceptance of the company's bills from India; forbidding also the issue of any of the public money after a prorogation or dissolution of Parliament, unless the act of appropriation shall have previously passed, and ordering accounts to be laid before the House of the monies already issued. With the same view, the second reading of the mutiny bill was deferred to the 23d of February. The immediate dissolution of Parliament being thus far rendered impracticable, the following resolutions were moved by the Earl of Surrey: "1. That in the present situation of his Majesty's dominions it was peculiarly necessary that there should be an administration that had the confidence of the public. 2. That the late changes in his Majesty's councils were accompanied with circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as did not conciliate the confidence of that



House." On this motion the House divided, but it was carried in the affirmative by 196 to 142 voices. On the 16th of January a resolution was moved by Lord Charles Spencer, "that the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility, was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the King and people." Upon this question the House divided, ayes 205, noes 184; so that the anti-ministerial majority was reduced to 21 voices.

On the 14th of January Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill for the better government of India, on principles which left the commercial concerns of the company in their own hands; and established a board of control, consisting of certain commissioners appointed by the King, possessing a negative on the proceedings of the company in all matters of government. The bill was read a second time the 23d of January; but on the motion of commitment was lost by 222 against 214.

Though the dismissal of the late ministers originated, on the part of the crown, from a sudden and strong resentment at a supposed invasion of the prerogative, the monarch acquired a popularity by the measure that effaced for a time all recollection of former disagreements, and elevated the loyalty of the people to an extraordinary degree of ardour. Every effort, however, of the new administration to secure an ascendancy in the House of Commons still failed, although the opposition could not long expect to possess the ground they now occupied. Addresses of thanks to the King for their late removal from power, in which the city of London took the lead in an unusual strain of loyalty, poured in from all quarters; their numbers were daily falling off; and, under such

circumstances, the most sanguine could not hope for ultimate success. Both parties, therefore, alarmed at the novel and dangerous situation of the country, seemed at length disposed to pause; and several independent members of the House of Commons, desirous of putting an end to this disordered state of things, by promoting a coalition between the parties, held meetings for that purpose at the St. Alban's Tavern, where they drew up an address to the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt, expressing their wishes for a free communication between them. Both of these persons declared themselves desirous of complying with the wishes of the meeting, but the resignation of Mr. Pitt, which the duke required as a necessary preliminary, could not be obtained. It was then resolved, as the only remaining expedient that could preserve unsullied the honour of both, without any concession of principle on either side, that a message should be sent from the King to the Duke of Portland, expressing his Majesty's desire that an interview might take place between his grace and Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of arranging a new plan of administration on *fair* and *equal* terms. The duke, previous to such interview, requested to be informed in what sense he was to understand the words *fair* and *equal*; and Mr. Pitt declining any explanation, the negotiation terminated.

The King and the nation at large were now evidently united in sentiment against the Commons; and the House of Peers, who had hitherto remained silent spectators of this extraordinary contest, thought proper to come forward at this time, and, on the motion of the Earl of Effingham, their lordships resolved, "1. That an attempt in any one branch of the legislature to suspend the execution of law, by separately assuming to

itself the direction of a discretionary power vested by act of Parliament, is unconstitutional. 2. That by the known principles of the constitution, the undoubted authority of appointing to the great offices of the executive government was solely vested in the King; and that this House had every reason to place the firmest reliance on his Majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative." These resolutions, in the form of an address, were presented to the King. It was not to be supposed that so direct an attack upon the authority and wisdom of the Commons would be passed over in silence. In return, therefore, they resolved, on the motion of Lord Beauchamp, "1. That the House had not assumed to itself a right to suspend the execution of law, and, 2. That for them to declare their opinion respecting the exercise of any discretionary power was constitutional and agreeable to established usage."

The opposition, who were still the majority of the House of Commons, found themselves daily in a more embarrassing situation; but no difficulties, however pressing, no dangers, however formidable, could subdue their spirit, or suspend their exertions. On the 18th of February, previous to the House entering on business, Mr. Pitt stated, in reply to a question whether he had any thing to communicate to the House relative to the resolutions which had been laid before the King, that his Majesty had not yet thought proper to dismiss his ministers, and that his ministers had not resigned. This intimation brought on a long and warm debate, and a motion for postponing the supplies was carried by a majority of 12. The House then adjourned to the 20th, when an address, carried by a majority of 20, was presented to the King, expressive of the reliance the House had on the wisdom of



the Sovereign, that he would take such measures as might tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful Commons, by removing every obstacle to the formation of such an administration as the House of Commons had declared to be requisite. His Majesty's answer, which was reported on the 27th, after stating his earnest desire to put an end to the divisions and distractions of the country, observed that there was no specific charge or complaint suggested against his present ministers, and that numbers of his subjects had expressed to him, in the warmest manner, their satisfaction at the late changes. Under these circumstances, he trusted his faithful Commons would not wish that the essential offices of the executive government should be vacated, until such a plan of union as had been called for could be carried into effect. This answer was by no means satisfactory; and on the 1st of March a yet stronger address was carried, but by a still smaller majority than the last, humbly beseeching his Majesty that he would be graciously pleased to lay the foundation of a strong and stable government, *by the previous removal of his present ministers.* To this address, which went directly to the point at issue, and left no room for evasion, the King replied, as before, that no charge nor complaint, nor any specific objection, was yet made against any of his present ministers; adding, "that if there were any just grounds for their removal, it ought to be equally a reason, for not admitting them as a part of that extended and united administration which is stated to be requisite."

The measure of addressing having been fully and unavailingly tried, and it now appearing unquestionably clear, that any farther experiment of this kind would prove nugatory, Mr. Fox, in the following

week, moved a *representation* to the crown, a mode of addressing to which no answer was customary, and which at great length, and in energetic language, stated "the dangerous and pernicious tendency of those measures and maxims, by which a new system of executive government had been set up, which, wanting the confidence of that House, and acting in defiance of their resolutions, must prove at once inadequate, by its inefficiency, to the necessary objects of government, and dangerous, by its example, to the liberties of the people." This motion was carried by a majority of *one*, the numbers being 191 to 190, and here the contest finally terminated, for on the following day, Mr. Fox, perceiving himself deserted by many of his partisans, abandoned his original intention of moving the postponement of the mutiny bill, as a security against a sudden dissolution. This step was so evidently to the advantage of the present ministers, that on the 24th of March the Parliament was prorogued, and the next day dissolved by proclamation.

If the origin, progress, and conclusion of this astonishing contest are impartially reviewed, and the principles and conduct of the leading characters candidly examined, it will appear, upon the whole, one of the most extraordinary events to be found in the latter periods of English history. Had the point at issue been only a question of prerogative, the public feeling would have taken another direction, and been expressed in language and addresses very different from the style of those which appeared on this occasion. To ascertain, then, the true causes which combined to produce such a ferment in the public mind against the House of Commons, we must survey the respective situations of the two great leaders, Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt, at the period of this distinguished contest.

The coalition of the former with Lord North, a measure highly obnoxious to national taste, lost this celebrated statesman a considerable portion of public confidence. Such an union, it was conceived, could only be effected by a sacrifice of principle and character; and it produced, therefore, a general opinion altogether unfavourable to Mr. Fox's reputation. In this situation of the public mind, the India bill presented a theme for copious and interesting declamation, of which Mr. Pitt availed himself so successfully, that every little corporation from the Land's End to John of Groat's House became alarmed for the security of their charters; the whole country was thrown into a ferment; and the collected clamours of a nation directed against the author of the bill. The defects in Mr. Pitt's public conduct and the mode he adopted to preserve himself in power were overlooked, whilst the people were gratefully forward to recognise every favourable quality in his private character. His youth and inexperience were held to be unequivocal proofs of his candour and sincerity; his eloquence in debate was cordially accepted as a pledge for the wisdom of his measures; and the name of Pitt proclaimed him the hereditary heir to the patriot virtues of his sire. Thus, without experiment, did the people of England give the young minister credit for all the splendid characteristics of a great and good statesman; and thus was he enabled to triumph over a powerful antagonist.

The influence of the crown being now combined with the independent interest, added to the whole weight of the East India Company, the general election presented the most unprecedented results. The coalitionists, even those who had stood highest in the estimation of the public, were almost every where



thrown out, and upwards of 160 members, including many who reckoned their return a matter of course, found themselves deprived of a seat. Mr. Fox himself, to the surprise of all, after a long and violent struggle for the city of Westminster, closed the poll with a majority of 235; but the high bailiff, by a scandalous partiality, refused to make the return in his favour, for which an action was afterwards brought by Mr. Fox, in the court of King's Bench, and 2000*l.* damages were awarded him.

The meeting of Parliament took place on the 18th of May; and from thence we may date the commencement of the parliamentary existence of administration, the remainder of the last session having been spent rather in a contest about places and power, than in the characteristic exertions of a regular government. The King, in his opening speech, expressed great satisfaction at meeting his parliament at this time, after having recurred in so important a moment to the sense of his people. He entertained a just and confident reliance, that they were animated by the same sentiments of loyalty and attachment to the constitution, which had been so fully manifested in every part of the kingdom, and recommended to their most serious consideration to frame suitable provisions for the good government of our possessions in the East Indies. The proposed address contained strong expressions of approbation respecting the late dissolution, which Lord Surrey, on the ground of unanimity, moved to omit; but Mr. Pitt declared, that much as he was convinced of the importance of unanimity, he would not purchase a hollow unanimity by passing over a great constitutional measure, which the circumstances of the times had made necessary and wise, and which had given the most entire satisfaction to every part of

the kingdom. On this point, therefore, the House divided, and the address, as originally proposed, was carried by a majority of 76 voices; a decisive proof that the dissolution had fully answered its intended purpose.

The business which chiefly occupied the attention of the House and the public for some time, was the complaint stated by Mr. Fox respecting the conduct of the high bailiff of Westminster, who had refused to make the return in his favour, although he had, on the face of the poll, a large majority. Whilst Mr. Fox was thus precluded from sitting for Westminster, he was returned to Parliament for the Scottish borough of Kirkwall, through the interest of Sir Thomas Dundas. On the 24th of May a resolution was moved by Mr. Lee, late attorney-general, "that the high bailiff of Westminster, on the day upon which the writ of election expired, ought to have returned two citizens to serve in Parliament for that city." A violent debate ensued; and the previous question having been moved by Sir Lloyd Kenyon, it was ordered that the high bailiff should attend the House the next day. The pretext on which that officer rested his defence was, that, having ground to suspect the validity of many votes taken in the course of a poll of six weeks' duration, he had granted a scrutiny, till the termination of which he could not, in conscience, make the return. To this an obvious and decisive answer presented itself. The scrutiny is nothing more than a revision of the poll by the returning officer; and if such revision cannot be completed previous to the period at which the writ is returnable, the officer is bound to make the return agreeably to the poll, as it was actually taken. The law of Parliament even allowed him to include all the candidates in the same



return, which would at once have transferred the task and burden of the decision, from his own conscience, to that of the House. After long pleadings by counsel at the bar of the House, on both sides, the motion was renewed, "that the high bailiff be directed forthwith to make the return." This motion was strongly opposed, and finally negatived by 195 against 117. It was then moved and carried, "that the high bailiff do proceed in the scrutiny with all possible dispatch." Thus was this business laid at rest during the present session.

A motion was made by Alderman Sawbridge, on the 16th of June, that a committee be appointed to inquire into the present state of the representation of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament. Mr. Pitt supported the principle of the motion, but contended that the time was improper; and Mr. Dundas, who had supported the proposition last year, objected, that the committee now moved for was a select committee, whereas it was his opinion, that it should be referred to a committee of the whole House. The motion was lost, by 201 to 127.

Mr. Pitt, whose plan for the future government of India was anxiously expected, brought in a bill on the 6th of July, founded on the general principles of that rejected by the former Parliament, and to which the company had now given their reluctant assent. By this bill, *a board of control*, composed of a certain number of commissioners of the rank of privy counsellors, was established, the members of which were to be appointed by the King, and removeable at his pleasure. This board was authorized to check, superintend, and control, the civil and military government and revenues of the company. The dispatches transmitted by the court of directors to the different presi-



dencies were to be previously subjected to the inspection of the board, and countersigned by them. The directors were enjoined to pay due obedience to the orders of the board, touching the civil and military government and revenues; and in case such orders do at any time, in the opinion of the directors, relate to matters not connected therewith, they are empowered to appeal to his Majesty in council, whose decision is declared final. The bill also enacted, that the appointment of the court of directors to the office of governor-general, president, or counsellor, in the different presidencies, shall be subject to the approbation and recal of his Majesty. As to the zemindars, or great hereditary landholders of India, the present bill provided, that an inquiry should be instituted, in order to restore such as should appear to have been irregularly and unjustly deprived. Lastly, an high tribunal was created, for the trial of Indian delinquents, consisting of three judges, one from each court, of four peers, and six members of the House of Commons, who were authorized to judge without appeal; to award, in case of conviction, the punishment of fine and imprisonment; and to declare the party convicted incapable of serving the East India Company. The management of their commercial concerns was left in the hands of the company, who were divested only of that political power which they had abused, and of that civil authority, to the due exercise of which they were incompetent. This authority was not transferred to persons, who, like the commissioners of Mr. Fox, might attempt to establish an unconstitutional influence in Parliament, not merely independent of, but in direct opposition to, the regular and constitutional authority of the crown. Mr. Fox observed, that the bill established a weak and inefficient govern-

ment, by dividing its powers. To the one board belonged the privilege of ordering and contriving measures; to the other, that of carrying them into execution. It was a system, he said, of dark intrigue and delusive art. Theories which did not connect men with measures, were not theories for this world. They were chimeras with which a recluse might divert his fancy, but they were not principles on which a statesman would found his system. By the negative vested in the commissioners, the chartered rights of the company, on which such stress had been laid, were insidiously undermined and virtually annihilated. If it were right to vest such powers in a board of privy counsellors, let it be done explicitly and openly, and show the company and the world that what they dared to do, they dared to justify. Founded on principles so heterogeneous, how, he asked, could such a government be other than the constant victim of internal distraction? The appeal allowed from the decisions of the board of control to the privy-council, was only an appeal from the aggressor transformed into the character of a judge, and was therefore in the highest degree nugatory and ridiculous. Against the clauses of the bill, respecting the zemindars, he entered his strongest protest. They ought, in his opinion, to be rated by a fixed rule of past periods, and not of a vague and indefinite future inquiry. The new tribunal he stigmatized as a screen for delinquents; as a palpable and unconstitutional violation of the sacred right of a trial by jury. Since no man was to be tried but on the accusation of the company, or the attorney-general, he had only to conciliate government in order to his remaining in perfect security. It was a part of the general system of deception and delusion, and he would venture to pronounce it a



bed of justice, where justice would for ever sleep. With all the partiality of the House for Mr. Pitt, this bill was found to be so crude and imperfect on its first appearance, that it underwent such a variety of subsequent amendments as nearly to lose its original shape; and after all, such were its radical defects, that it required a declaratory act to render it intelligible. With respect to the amendments, Mr. Sheridan humorously remarked, that twenty-one new clauses were added to the bill, which were distinguished by the letters of the alphabet, and he requested some gentleman to suggest three more, in order to complete the horn-book of the present ministry. On the motion of commitment, the numbers were 276 to 61; and the bill was carried in triumph to the Peers, where, after an opposition very feeble in numbers, it passed on the 9th of August. In a protest, however, it was severely branded, as a measure ineffectual in its provisions, unconstitutional in its partial abolition of the trial by jury, and unjust in its inquisitorial spirit.

The arrival of Sir Elijah Impey, chief judge of the supreme court of judicature at Bengal, who had been recalled by the King, in conformity to an address of that House, having taken place, Mr. Burke earnestly recommended it to the chancellor of the exchequer, to enforce the resolutions of that House respecting him; but Mr. Pitt unequivocally declined any concern in the affair. In consequence, Mr. Burke moved (July the 28th) that the House should resolve itself into a committee, to inquire into the facts stated in the different reports relative to India. The motion having been negatived by the order of the day, Mr. Burke, two days afterwards, brought forward a series of resolutions, intended as a foundation for an inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Hastings. Mr. Pitt immediately



rose, and asked, how that House, as a House of Parliament, knew, as a fact, the transactions on which Mr. Burke grounded his motion? If the motion passed, from what office were the papers expected to proceed? To relieve the House from these embarrassments, he said, he should move the order of the day. Mr. Burke, indignant at this second interruption, now stood forward, and declaimed, with great warmth, against the insensibility of government to the foul enormities lately perpetrated, and still perpetrating, by our countrymen in the East. The cries of the native Indians, he said, were never out of his ears; an impression of horror had seized on his mind, which deprived him of sleep, and, night and day, preyed upon his peace. The reality of the facts stated in the reports had been impeached. Why, then, would not the men who denied them stand forward and support their allegations? "Oh! what," said Mr. Burke, "would I not give to find the scenes of horror described nothing more than a fiction! To me it would be a discovery more precious and grateful than the discovery of a new world." He declared that he wished it for the honour of humanity, from sympathy to millions of suffering and helpless individuals, from his anxious desire to retrieve the honour of the House, and of the country at large, from infamy and execration. He conjured Mr. Pitt to reflect with seriousness on this business. The voice of India cried aloud for justice. He was at a loss, he said, how to account for the callous insensibility of the minister, at a time of life when all the generous feelings of our nature are most lively and susceptible. Proceeding in reflections very pointed and personal, the orator was loudly called to order; and was at length compelled to sit down amidst universal clamour and tumult.

The attention of the House was now transferred to a bill for the more effectual prevention of the practice of smuggling, which had of late years arisen to a most alarming height. The most extraordinary part of the plan was the reduction of the duties paid by the East India Company on the importation of tea, which was affirmed to be the grand medium of the smuggling traffic; and the consequent imposition of a new duty on windows, to the amount of the deficiency, estimated at 600,000*l.* per annum. This was styled by the minister a commutation tax; and its equity was defended on the idea, that, teas being an article of universal consumption, the weight of the tax would be compensated by a proportional abatement in the purchase of the commodity. Mr. Fox asked, what connexion there was between an impost upon tea and an impost upon windows, to entitle the latter to be denominated a commutation for the former? He affirmed it to be the essence of financial injustice and oppression to take off a tax upon luxury, and to substitute in its stead a tax upon that which was of indispensable necessity. The bill, however, passed by a great majority.

The remaining great operation of finance during this session, was the providing for the arrears of the unfunded debt left at the conclusion of the war, amounting to more than 20,000,000*l.* This was disposed of partly in the four per cents., and partly in a newly created five per cent. stock, made irredeemable for thirty years, or until 25,000,000*l.* of the existing funds should be extinguished. It must not be omitted, that the sum of 60,000*l.* was voted to his Majesty, to enable him to discharge the debt contracted on the civil list. This was the fourth grant for the same purpose since his accession. A warm altercation took



place as to the precise period when this debt was incurred; all, however, that the public could be fully certified of was, that with the civil list revenue of 800,000*l.*; afterwards increased to 900,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the revenues arising from the crown lands, more than 1,400,000*l.* had been voted within the space of about fifteen years, for the payment of the debts of the crown.

The last measure which came before Parliament during the present session, was a bill introduced by Mr. Dundas, for the restoration of the estates forfeited in Scotland, in consequence of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Mr. Dundas declared the measure to be, in his opinion, worthy of the justice and generosity of Parliament. He said there was not one of the families comprehended in the scope of it, in which some person had not atoned for the crimes and errors of his ancestors, by sacrificing his blood in the cause of his country; and that the Sovereign had not, for a long series of years past, a more loyal set of subjects than the highlanders and their chieftains. Of this the late Lord Chatham was deeply sensible, and that illustrious statesman had publicly recognised the rectitude of the measure now proposed. He did not, however, mean, that the estates should be freed from the claims existing against them at the time of forfeiture. This might be regarded as a premium for rebellion. He therefore proposed the appropriation of such sums, amounting to about 80,000*l.*, to public purposes; 50,000*l.* of which he would recommend to be employed in the completion of the grand canal reaching from the Frith of Forth to that of Clyde. This liberal measure was received in a manner that did honour to the feelings of the House. Mr. Fox, in particular, bestowed upon it the highest encomiums.



Nevertheless, when the bill was sent to the Lords, it met with a most determined resistance from the lord-chancellor, who expatiated, with much satisfaction, on that maxim of ancient wisdom, which pronounced treason to be a crime of so deep a dye, that nothing less was adequate to its punishment, than the total eradication of the person, the name, and the family, out of the community. On dividing the House, this nobleman was left in a great minority, and, to the entire satisfaction of the public, the bill passed.

Parliament was prorogued on the 20th of August, the King returning his warmest thanks to the two Houses, for their zealous and diligent attention to the public service.

Ireland, at this period, was in a very disturbed state. On the 1st of July, 1783, the delegates of forty-five volunteer corps had assembled at Lisburne, in the county of Antrim, to consider of the measures proper to be adopted, to effect a reform in Parliament. A committee was then appointed to meet at Belfast; by whom letters were addressed to many persons of consequence in the sister kingdom, requesting their advice and opinion on this important subject. The meeting at Lisburne was followed by an assembly of delegates at Dungannon, for the province of Ulster; at which the Earl of Charlemont, generalissimo of the volunteer corps throughout the kingdom; Mr. Conally, considered as the first commoner in point of property; and the Bishop of Derry, brother to the Earl of Bristol, nominated in the year 1766 to the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, were present. The provinces of Leinster and Munster followed the example of Ulster, and a national convention was appointed to be held at Dublin on the 10th of November, 1783. This was the posture of affairs when the Parliament

of Ireland, recently elected, met on the 14th of October. On the first day of the session the thanks of both Houses were voted to the different volunteer corps of Ireland, for their public services; and a resolution, proposed by Lord Mountmorres, "that, in the present state of the kingdom, it was expedient that there should be a session of Parliament held every year," received the sanction of both Houses. On the 10th of November the national convention assembled, and the Earl of Charlemont was elected president. On the motion of the Bishop of Derry, a committee was forthwith appointed to digest a plan of reform, who, in a short time, reported their opinion, "that every Protestant freeholder, or leaseholder, possessing a freehold or leasehold for a certain term of years of 40s. value, resident in any city or borough, should be entitled to vote in the election of member for the same: that decayed boroughs should be enabled to return representatives by an extension of franchise to the neighbouring parishes: that the suffrages of the electors should be taken by the sheriff or his deputies on the same day at the respective places of election: that pensioners of the crown, receiving their pensions during pleasure, should be incapacitated from sitting in Parliament: that every member of Parliament accepting a pension for life, or any place under the crown, should vacate his seat: that each member should subscribe an oath, that he had neither directly, nor indirectly, given any pecuniary or other consideration, with a view of obtaining the suffrage of any elector: finally, that the duration of Parliament should not exceed the term of three years." This report was received with great applause, and resolutions to the same purport unanimously passed. The next day Mr. Flood moved the House of Commons, for leave



to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in Parliament. The motion was received with much displeasure by a great majority of the members, as being a proposal tendered to them at the point of the bayonet, and it was rejected by 157 against 77. An address to the King was then voted, expressive of the sense felt by the House of the blessings they enjoyed under his auspices, and assuring him that they were determined to support inviolate the present constitution with their lives and fortunes. In this address the Lords concurred; but a protest, signed by the Earl of Charlemont and four other Peers, was entered against it in the journals of the House. Mr. Flood reported to the national convention, at their sitting of the 1st of December, the conduct of the House of Commons; when they merely passed a resolution, that they would carry on individually such investigations as might be necessary to complete the plan of parliamentary reform. Their humiliation was still more apparent in the address, voted on the following day, to the King, on the motion of Mr. Flood, in the name of the delegates of all the volunteers of Ireland, expressive of their duty and loyalty, claiming the merits of their past exertions, and imploring the King, that their humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the parliamentary representation of that kingdom remedied by the legislature, in some reasonable degree, might not be attributed to any spirit of innovation, but to a sober and laudable desire to uphold the constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of their fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms. The convention then adjourned *sine die*. The Parliament of Ireland adjourned for the Christmas recess, on the 22d of December, 1783. Previously to their re-as-



sembling, Mr. Pitt had taken the helm of government, and the Duke of Rutland had superseded the Earl of Nottingham in the viceroyalty of Ireland. On the 13th of March following, Mr. Flood renewed his motion for parliamentary reform, which was rejected by 159 against 85 voices. This decision gave secret satisfaction to those friends of reform who dreaded the emancipation of the Catholics still more than the present system. The Ulster volunteers presented, on a subsequent occasion, an address to their general, the Earl of Charlemont, expressing their satisfaction at the decay of those prejudices which, by limiting the right of suffrage, and circumscribing the number of their citizens, had, in a great degree, created and fostered aristocratic tyranny, the source of every grievance, and against which the public voice now unanimously exclaimed. The Earl of Charlemont, in answer, professed himself free from every illiberal prejudice against the Catholics, but entreated the volunteers to desist from a pursuit that would fatally clog and impede the prosecution of their favourite purpose, and besought them not to indulge any opinion that must and would create disunion. This answer being circulated throughout the kingdom heightened that disunion which it professed to deprecate, and the object itself seemed relinquished in despair.

The people of Ireland now loudly called for protecting duties, to foster the infant manufactures of that country, and to compel the inhabitants to consume the produce of native ingenuity and industry. On the 31st of March Mr. Gardiner, member for the county of Dublin, in an able speech, depicted the distresses of the kingdom; called upon the House to copy the conduct of England, of France, and other

commercial countries, by protecting their manufactures at home; and moved for a high duty on woollens imported into the kingdom. This motion was negatived by a large majority; the whole system of protecting duties being ridiculed as visionary and pernicious. The disappointment of the people now kindled into rage, and the short-lived popularity of the new viceroy was, in the course of a month, entirely at an end. So critical was the state of the Irish metropolis at this period, that it was thought necessary to countermand the embarkation of several regiments destined to the East Indies, and to furnish the garrison of Dublin, consisting of about 4000 regular troops, with thirty rounds of powder and ball per man. Before the end of the session an address was unanimously voted by the House of Commons to the Sovereign, representing the distressed state of the kingdom, and praying for the establishment of a more advantageous system of commerce between Ireland and Great Britain; and on the 14th of May the Parliament was prorogued. The last measure of the Parliament seemed, in some measure, to calm the violence of the people. On the 7th of June an extraordinary meeting of the aggregate body of the citizens of Dublin was convened by the sheriffs, in which they came to resolutions declaratory of the right of the people of Ireland to a frequent election, and an equal representation. They called upon the nation to unite with them in the measures necessary to its introduction, and in presenting petitions to the King for a dissolution of the existing Parliament. They asserted that the force of the state consisted in the union of the inhabitants—that an equal participation in all the rights of a man and a citizen was proper, henceforth, to engage all the members of the



state to co-operate efficaciously for the greatest general good. Finally, that it would be of the happiest consequence to the prosperity of the state, and the maintaining of civil liberty, to extend to their brethren, the Roman Catholics, the right of suffrage, as fully as was compatible with the maintenance of the Protestant government. In an address to the people of Ireland they proposed the election of five delegates from each county, city, and considerable town, to meet in Dublin, October the 25th next ensuing, in national congress. On the 9th of August resolutions nearly similar were agreed to at the general meeting of the freeholders of the county of Dublin; and a petition was also voted by them to the King, for a dissolution of the Parliament. The lord-lieutenant, on being requested to transmit these petitions to England, declared it to be his duty to do so; but that he should not fail to accompany them with his entire disapprobation, as they included unjust and indecent reflections upon the laws and parliament of Ireland, and as they tended to foment fatal dissensions among the people. Conscious of its strength, the government of Ireland did not long content itself with a cold expression of disapprobation. The 20th of September having been fixed upon as the day for electing five delegates to represent the city of Dublin in national congress, a short time previously to the intended meeting Mr. Fitzgibbon, the attorney-general, wrote a letter to the sheriffs, expressing his astonishment at having read a public summons signed by them for this purpose, and threatening them with a prosecution if they should proceed. The sheriffs, alarmed at this menace, refused to take any part in the business. Five delegates were, however, chosen, and a resolution passed, declaring the conduct of the



attorney-general to be a violation of Magna Charta. The attorney-general, holding this resolution in contempt, filed informations against the high sheriffs of various counties for convening and presiding at similar meetings. The national congress, however, met on the 25th of October. After a session of three days only, finding their numbers on the return very incomplete, they adjourned to the 20th of January, 1785, having previously passed several resolutions, importing, that the appointment of that assembly, and the steps that had been taken, were in entire conformity with the constitution of Ireland. On the same day commenced the second session of the Parliament of Ireland; and in a short time Mr. Orde, secretary to the lord-lieutenant, laid before the House a series of commercial regulations, digested, during the recess, into a regular system. There were two plans, on which a permanent arrangement might be formed on the basis of equality: 1. A system of mutual prohibition, and, 2. A system of mutual admission. The propositions, eleven in number, moved by Mr. Orde, were framed in conformity to the latter, and, unquestionably, the wiser of these opposite systems. Much violent discussion ensued; but, ultimately, the propositions were joyfully received, and ratified by a decisive majority of the House.

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## CHAPTER XV.

**DURING** the interval between the prorogation of Parliament and its re-assembling, the nation enjoyed a period of profound tranquillity, the people of England seeming to repose with unbounded confidence in the

wisdom and integrity of the new administration. On the 25th of January, 1785, the second session was opened by a speech from the throne, in which the King recommended the two Houses to apply their utmost attention to the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between this country and Ireland, as were not yet finally arranged. The address of thanks being carried unanimously, the first business which engaged the attention of the House of Commons was the state of the Westminster scrutiny, as it had now continued for eight months, at a vast expense, and only two parishes out of seven had been gone through. The imbecility of the court of scrutiny, as it was pompously called, was exposed in the most sarcastic terms, the high bailiff having no power to summon witnesses, to impose an oath, or to commit for contumacy. Mr. Pitt, however, to the astonishment of the public, vindicated the proceedings, on which Mr. Fox, with indignant warmth, remarked, that he well remembered the day when he congratulated the House on the acquisition of Mr. Pitt's splendid abilities: it had been his pride to fight in conjunction with him the battles of the constitution: he had been ever ready to recognise in the right honourable gentleman a formidable rival, who would leave him far behind in the pursuit of glory: but he had never expected that this rival would become his persecutor. He considered the present measure with regard to Westminster to be instituted instead of an expulsion. The case of the Middlesex election, so much reprobated, had at least the merit of being more manly; for the procedure now adopted accomplished the same end of expulsion, without daring to exhibit any charge against the person expelled. On the 9th of February, Mr. Welbore Ellis moved, that



the high bailiff do attend at the bar of the House, which was negatived by 174 to 135 voices. Another motion, of a similar tendency, was soon after rejected by a majority of only nine; and on the 3d of March it was repeated a third time by Alderman Sawbridge, when it was carried in the affirmative, by 162 against 124, leaving the minister in a disgraceful minority; and on the next day Lord Hood and Mr. Fox were duly returned.

Mr. Pitt next drew the public attention to a subject of considerable interest. On the 18th of April he brought forward a plan for a reform in the representation, in some degree varying from his preceding attempts, and on which he had evidently bestowed considerable attention. He rose, he said, with hopes infinitely more sanguine than he had ever ventured to entertain at any former period. There never was a moment when the minds of men were more enlightened on this interesting subject, or more prepared for its discussion. He declared his present plan of reform to be perfectly coincident with the spirit of those changes which had taken place in the exercise of the elective franchise from the earliest ages, and not in the least allied to the spirit of innovation. So far back as the reign of Edward the First, before which the component orders of the representative body could not be distinctly traced, the franchise of election had been constantly fluctuating. As one borough decayed and another flourished, the first was abolished and the second invested with the right. Even the representation of the counties had not been uniform. King James the First, in his first proclamation for calling a parliament, directed that the sheriffs should not call upon such boroughs as were decayed and ruined to send members to Parliament. For this discretion, as



vested in the crown, he was certainly no advocate ; but he wished to establish a permanent rule, to operate like the discretion out of which the constitution had sprung. He wished, he said, to bring forward a plan that should be complete, gradual, and permanent ; a plan that not only corrected the inequalities of the present system, but which would be competent to preserve the purity it restored, and give to the constitution not only consistency, but, if possible, immortality. It was his design, that the actual number of the House of Commons should be preserved inviolate. His immediate object was to select a certain number of the decayed and rotten boroughs, the right of representation attached to thirty-six of which should be transferred to the counties, in such proportions as the wisdom of Parliament might prescribe ; and that all unnecessary harshness might be avoided, he recommended the appropriation of a fund of 1,000,000*l.* to be applied to the purchasing the franchise of such boroughs, on their voluntary application to Parliament. When this was effected, he proposed to extend the bill to the purchasing the franchise of other boroughs, besides the original thirty-six ; and to transfer the right of returning members to large towns, hitherto unrepresented, upon their petitioning Parliament to be indulged with this privilege. It was also his wish to admit copyholders to an equality with freeholders, and to extend the franchise in populous towns, where the electors were few, to the inhabitants in general. This plan would give 100 members to the popular interest in the kingdom, and extend the right of election to 100,000 persons, who, by the existing provisions of the law, were excluded from it. Mr. Fox remarked, "that government was not a property, but a trust," and he strongly objected to the idea of pur-

chasing franchises of boroughs which, from their insignificance, were no longer entitled to send members to Parliament. He, however, bestowed upon the plan of the minister a just and liberal tribute of praise. On the other hand, it was ridiculed by Mr. Powys, as the mere knight-errantry of a political Quixote; as an example, a precedent, an incitement, to the wildest and most paradoxical nostrums that speculative theorists could devise. At length, after a long debate, Mr. Pitt's motion was rejected by 248 against 174.

In consequence of the very able reports presented from time to time by the commissioners of accounts, Mr. Pitt brought in three several bills, for the better auditing and examining the public accounts, and for the regulation and reform of the public offices, which passed with great applause, and no material opposition; and, on the 9th of May, he proposed that the remaining part of the floating arrear of debt, consisting of navy bills and ordnance debentures, should be funded on five per cent. stock, and the interest, amounting to above 400,000*l.* per annum, provided by fresh taxes, one of which, a tax on retail shops, calculated at 120,000*l.* per annum, proved particularly obnoxious. As this tax was proportioned to the rent of the house, it was denominated neither more nor less than a partial house tax; and the whole body of retail traders were agreed, that it was utterly impracticable to indemnify themselves, by raising the price of the different commodities upon the consumer. Conscious of the unpopularity of the measure, Mr. Pitt, by way of recompense to the shopkeeper, proposed by a deed of unprecedented oppression, to revoke and take away the license from all hawkers and pedlars, whom he styled a pest to the community, and a nursery and medium for the preservation of illicit trade. The cause of this humble,



useful, and unprotected description of men, was powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, and other gentlemen; indeed, such was the indefensibility of the proposed regulation, that Mr. Dempster, in the course of the debate, truly affirmed the principle of the bill to be no less iniquitous than that of the expulsion of the Moriscoes from Spain, or of the Huguenots from France. The result was, that the prohibition was changed to a heavy duty, and a number of severe restrictions were also enacted.

The subject which chiefly engaged the attention of Parliament during the present session, was the projected plan of commercial intercourse with the sister kingdom. This new system, which received the final assent of the Parliament of Ireland on the 16th of February, was brought before the British House of Commons on the 22d by Mr. Pitt, who, in the opening of this important business, submitted some excellent observations on the species of policy which had been long exercised by the English government in regard to Ireland, the object of which was to debar her from the enjoyment and use of her own resources, and to make her completely subservient to the interest and opulence of this country. Some relaxation of this system had taken place, indeed, at an early period of the present century; and more had been done in the reign of George the Second; but it was not till within a very few years that the system had been completely revised. Still, however, the future intercourse between the two kingdoms remained for legislative wisdom to arrange; and the propositions moved by Mr. Orde in the Irish Parliament, and ratified by that assembly, held out, he said, a system liberal, beneficial, and permanent. If the question should be asked, whether, under the accumulation of our heavy



taxes, it would be wise to equalize the duties, and to enable a country free from those taxes to meet us in their own market and in ours, he would answer, that Ireland, with an independent legislature, would no longer submit to be treated with as an inferior. A great and generous effort was to be made by this country, and we were to choose between inevitable alternatives. Our manufactures, however, were so decidedly superior to theirs, that the immunities proposed would be in fact, and for many years to come, productive of little alteration. It would require time for the acquisition of both capital and skill; and as these increased, the difference between the price of labour there and in this country would be incessantly diminishing. After all, there might, he admitted, be some branches of manufacture in which Ireland might rival and perhaps excel England; but this ought not to give us pain. We must calculate from general and not from partial views, but above all, we should learn not to regard Ireland with an eye of jealousy, for it required little philosophy to reconcile us to a competition, which would give us a rich customer instead of a poor one. The prosperity of the sister kingdom would be a fresh and inexhaustible source of opulence to us. The vastness of the plan, and of the objects it embraced, seemed to keep the public mind in a kind of suspense; and for nearly a month after its first introduction, no indications of serious or determined opposition were discernible. Mr. Fox, indeed, when the subject was first started, observed, that the greater part of Mr. Pitt's speech was little else than a reply to that of Mr. Orde in the Irish House of Commons. In Ireland, the propositions had been stated as in the highest degree advantageous to that country; as rendering it the emporium of Europe, and the source

and supply of the British markets. Here the great recommendation of the system was, that the benefits accruing to Ireland were, if not wholly visionary, at best trivial and remote. We are told, said Mr. Fox, that Ireland cannot rival England ; that she is poor and feeble, and would very long, in all probability, remain so. He must, however, do Mr. Orde the justice to acknowledge, that he had defended the propositions, and argued upon them, infinitely better than the British minister. As to the report of the privy-council, to whom the consideration of this business had been previously referred, Mr. Fox remarked that they had entirely overlooked a question which appeared to him of primary importance ; he meant the propriety and policy of permitting the produce of Africa and America to be brought into Great Britain through Ireland. By this means we threw down the whole fabric of our navigation laws. Even with regard to the great article of tea, the period was not very distant, when the charter of the East India Company would expire, and, according to the tenor of the proposed resolutions, there certainly remained no power in this country to renew it with the same, or, indeed, any exclusive privileges. Mr. Fox censured the precipitancy with which this business was urged : he asserted, that not only the manufactures, but the revenues and political existence of Britain were involved in the discussion ; and he contended for the necessity of calling the merchants and manufacturers to the bar of the House, in order that the House might be fully informed in a case of this momentous nature, before they proceeded to vote a definitive resolution. About the middle of March, the spirit of commercial jealousy appeared to be thoroughly awakened. Upwards of sixty petitions from every quarter of he



kingdom were presented against the measure, and there was scarcely a single species of manufacture or merchandize, upon the subject of which the persons peculiarly interested had not conceived considerable alarm. From the 16th of March to the 12th of May, the House of Commons were almost incessantly employed in the hearing of counsel, and the examination of witnesses, and Mr. Pitt was at length compelled to acknowledge the necessity of making some material amendments in his original plan. Accordingly, on the 12th of May, he brought forward a series of propositions, so altered as to exhibit what might well be considered a new system. On this occasion, Mr. Fox observed, in the language of triumph, that if the original resolutions had passed, we should have lost, for ever, the monopoly of the East India trade; we must have hazarded all the revenue arising from spirituous liquors; we should have sacrificed the whole of our navigation laws. He argued that the propositions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extensive to be voted by a majority of that House, on any other ground than that of confidence in the minister; that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was absurd; and that he who acquiesced in the measure from any other inducement than that of sincere conviction, surrendered every claim to honest estimation, and was unworthy the situation of a senator and the name of an Englishman. The House at length divided on the motion of adjournment, ayes 155, noes 281; and at eight o'clock in the morning the first resolution passed the House. After a warm contest, the whole were carried; and on the 30th of May they were sent up to the Lords, where they again underwent a long and laborious investigation, in the course of which various



amendments were made. The resolutions were sent back to the Commons on the 19th of July; after much debate, the amendments were agreed to; and on the 28th an address was presented to the King, acquainting him with the steps which had been taken in this affair. The two Houses now adjourned to a distant day; and on the 30th of September the Parliament was prorogued by proclamation.

The propositions having been transmitted to Ireland, Mr. Orde moved, on the 12th of August, for leave to bring in a bill for establishing the system of commercial intercourse therein contained. He defended the variations which now appeared, by alleging the natural progress of a measure of this nature. On a comparison of the two sets of propositions, however, the magnitude and importance of the alterations strikingly appeared; and the fourth resolution in particular, by which England assumed a power of legislative regulation and commercial control with respect to Ireland, was peremptorily rejected. After much violent debate, the secretary, to preclude a motion of censure framed by Mr. Flood, moved an adjournment, which was carried without a division; public illuminations in the populous towns of Ireland testified the general joy excited by the sudden termination of a business which was originally intended to communicate, both to England and Ireland, solid and lasting advantages, but, from the issue, appears to have been destined, by a singular fate, to rouse commercial jealousies, to awaken national prejudices, to provoke, where it was intended to conciliate, to inflame resentment where it was expected to challenge gratitude, and greatly to disturb the public tranquillity of both kingdoms.

The British Parliament assembled on the 24th of January, 1786. The King declared to the House of

Commons his earnest wish to enforce economy in every department; recommended to them the maintenance of our naval strength on the most respectable footing; and, above all, the establishment of a fixed plan for the reduction of the national debt. Nothing important passed until the 10th of February, when the estimate of the ordnance was brought up in the committee of supply. Mr. Pitt then called the attention of the House to the plan laid before them in the course of the last session, under the sanction of the Duke of Richmond, master-general of the ordnance, for fortifying the dock-yards of the kingdom; the propriety of which it was then agreed to refer to a board of land and sea officers, whose report Mr. Pitt stated to be in the highest degree favourable to the plan of fortification submitted to their decision; but the report itself he declined laying before the House, as a matter of too serious and delicate a nature for public inspection. The discontent manifested when the question was last year under discussion now rose into indignation. If the report, or the essentials it contained, were not to be in some mode subject to the inspection of the House, they were, it was affirmed, in exactly the same situation in which they had stood before the board was appointed. They must decide, not upon their own judgments, but in deference to the authority of the minister. The expense attending this novel system would be enormous, and it was at least their duty, before they adopted it, to be fully convinced of its necessity. General Burgoyne, who was one of the board, controverted the assertion of Mr. Pitt respecting the entire approbation expressed by them of the system in question. It was well known, he said, that cases hypothetically put, admitted only of a direct answer given under the admission of the hypothesis.



It remained to be ascertained, whether the case was sufficiently within the limits of probability to deserve attention. Several of those on which the board were called upon to decide were as extravagant as if it were asked, "suppose, by some convulsion of nature, the Straits of Dover should vanish out of existence, and the coasts of England and France were to unite, would it not be expedient to fortify the isthmus between the two countries?" The subject, he said, whether considered as a question of science, of revenue, or of constitution, was of the utmost importance. Mr. Pitt postponed the farther discussion till the 27th of February, when he moved the following resolution: "That it appears to this House, that to provide effectually for securing the dock-yards of Portsmouth and Plymouth by a permanent system of fortification, is an essential object for the safety of the state, &c. &c." On this occasion a very warm debate arose, in which Mr. Sheridan particularly distinguished himself. When we talked of a constitutional jealousy of the military power of the crown, what, he asked, was the real object to which we pointed our suspicion? What, but that it was in the nature of Kings to love power, and in the constitution of armies to obey Kings. This doubtless, he said, was plain speaking upon a delicate subject, but the nature of the question demanded it. In this point of view, would no stress be laid on the great and important distinction to be drawn, between troops elected and separated from their fellow-citizens in garrisons and forts, and men living scattered and entangled in all the common duties and connexions of their countrymen? He proceeded to argue, that these strong military holds would become hostages in the hands of the crown, which must ensure unconditional submission to any



despotism, and that the system now recommended would not end with Portsmouth and Plymouth. It was not possible, he said, for the House to remain at a loss to discover various places, besides Chatham and Sheerness, where extensive lines had actually been begun, under the auspices of the Duke of Richmond, which must necessarily be provided for according to the new system. He wished to see the estimate for the stationary defence of such places, in addition to the 20,000 men demanded for Portsmouth and Plymouth. If, however, the professional abilities of the Duke of Richmond were ill employed in the fabrication of so wild a project, it must be acknowledged that they appeared to advantage in the planning and constructing the report in question. There were certain detached *data*, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate : strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions : no impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations, and it was necessary to assail it by regular approaches. Much ingenuity likewise had been shown in extracting such parts of the report as were deemed most favourable to the proposed system. The minutes which contained the opinion of the naval officers, in condemnation of the plan, were wholly omitted, because they were mixed with matter of such dangerous import, that no chemical process known in the ordnance laboratory could possibly separate them ; whilst on the contrary every approving opinion, like a light, oily fluid, floated at the top, and was capable of being presented to the House, pure and untinged by a single particle of the argument and information upon which it was founded. The division was rendered memorable by an exact equality of numbers, both the ayes

and the noes amounting to 169. The speaker, as usual in such cases, being called upon for his casting vote, added his negative to those who had voted for the rejection of the project. Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding this defeat, after an interval of a few weeks, brought forward the question again, in a new form, by moving, "that an estimate of the expense of such part of the plan of fortification recommended in the late report, as might appear most necessary to be carried into immediate execution, be referred to a committee of supply"—the probable expense of which was estimated at 400,000*l*. This was received with extreme disapprobation; and Mr. Pitt at length withdrew the motion.

In the month of March, Mr. Pitt moved for the appointment of a select committee, by ballot, to report to the House the state of the public revenue and expenditure. The result of their inquiry was eminently satisfactory. The amount of the revenue for the current year was estimated at 15,397,000*l*.—the permanent expenditure, including the civil list and the interests payable on the different funds, amounted to 10,554,000*l*.—the peace establishment, allowing 18,000 men for the navy, and the usual complement of seventy regiments for the army, exclusive of life-guards and cavalry, was estimated at 3,924,000*l*.; in all, 14,000,000*l*.; in consequence there remained a surplus of more than 900,000*l*. Mr. Pitt observed, that though this was stated to be the annual expenditure, a considerable interval must elapse before this reduction could take place; this term he fixed at four years. The exceedings of the army, navy, and ordnance, together with the sums necessary for the indemnification of the American loyalists, he calculated would not, during this period, fall short of 3,000,000*l*.

The war from which we were just delivered had been most expensive and ruinous; these unavoidable exceedings were amongst the bitter fruits of it; but if, during the first years of peace, extraordinary expense were incurred, they afforded also extraordinary savings. There were sums appropriated during the war to different services, which had not been expended; 450,000*l.* had already been paid into the exchequer upon this account. There were, moreover, immense sums in the hands of former paymasters, which, it was expected, would soon be brought to account; these he conjecturally stated at the sum of 1,000,000*l.* There was a balance of 600,000*l.* due to the government from the East India Company. When to these were added the improvements that might yet be made by judicious regulations in the different branches of the revenue, he was not, he hoped, too sanguine in affirming that we possessed resources equal to all our ordinary and extraordinary demands. The proposition which he now submitted to the House was, the appropriation of the annual sum of 1,000,000*l.* to be invariably applied to the liquidation of the public debt. The surplus of the revenue amounting to 900,000*l.* only, Mr. Pitt moved for an additional duty on spirits, on certain kinds of timber imported, and on perfumery, which would together be more than sufficient to make up the deficiency. This annual million Mr. Pitt proposed to vest in the hands of certain commissioners, to be by them applied regularly to the purchase of stock; so that no sum should ever be within the grasp of any future minister large enough to tempt him to violate this sacred deposit. The interests annually discharged were, conformably to this plan, to be added to and incorporated with the original fund, so that it would operate with a determinate and accelerated



velocity; being, in this respect, framed upon the model of the sinking fund formerly projected by Sir Robert Walpole. This fund was also to be assisted by the annuities granted for different terms, which would from time to time fall in within the limited period of twenty-eight years, at the expiration of which Mr. Pitt calculated that the fund would produce an income of 4,000,000*l.* per annum. When a progress so considerable was made in the reduction of the debt, Parliament might with propriety pause, and adopt such new measures for the relief of the nation, and the extinction of the most oppressive and burdensome taxes, as to the legislative wisdom should seem meet. The commissioners to be nominated under the act were, the chancellor of the exchequer, the speaker of the House of Commons, the master of the rolls, the governor and deputy-governor of the Bank of England, and the accomptant-general of the high court of chancery. Such were the persons, Mr. Pitt said, whom he should propose to be appointed to this trust. This plan had long been the wish and the hope of all good men, and he felt inexpressible pleasure in being able to flatter himself that his name might be inscribed on that firm column, which was now about to be raised to national faith and national prosperity. In the progress of the bill, Mr. Fox suggested, "that whenever a new loan should hereafter be made, the commissioners should be empowered to accept the loan, or such proportion of it as should be equal to the cash then in their hands; the interest and *douceur* annexed to which should be applied to the purposes of the sinking fund." This amendment, the only one of consequence offered, was well received by Mr. Pitt, who declared it to be an auspicious omen of the ultimate success of the plan, that its propriety and neces-

sity had been so obvious as to overcome the spirit and prejudice of party, and create an unanimity of sentiment in persons who, more he was sure from accident than inclination, were so frequently of different opinions. The policy of the principle of making the income of the state so far exceed its expenditure as to leave a surplus for the discharge of the national debt being universally acknowledged, the bill finally passed with general approbation.

Before the sinking fund bill passed into a law, a message from the King to the House of Commons was delivered by the minister, stating, that it gave him great concern to inform them, that it had not been found possible to confine the expenses of the civil list within the annual sum of 850,000*l.* now applicable to that purpose. A farther debt had been necessarily incurred, and the King relied on the zeal and affection of his Parliament to make provision for its discharge. When the last demand of this sort was made in July, 1784, for the sum of 60,000*l.* Mr. Pitt rested his defence on the ground that the debt was contracted before he came last into office; but the motion founded on this message he supported on the plea, that, under Mr. Burke's reform bill, an annual reduction of 50,000*l.* from the civil list having been set apart for the liquidation by instalments of the sum of 300,000*l.* then issued in exchequer bills for the supply of former deficiencies, of which 180,000*l.* yet remained unpaid; and a fresh debt of 30,000*l.* having accrued, either Parliament had, at the period referred to, directed that when the proposed liquidation should be effected, the civil list should be allowed 50,000*l.* per annum *more than was necessary*, or it was then put upon a footing of 50,000*l.* per annum *less than was necessary*. Experience, he said, had proved

the latter to be the case; and therefore it was reasonable to expect that the sum of 210,000*l.* now wanting to clear off the old and new encumbrances, would be granted without hesitation. The money was ultimately voted, but not without considerable opposition, in the course of which the necessity of economy was strongly enforced. This application was the more remarkable, as, at the opening of the session of December, 1782, and when Mr. Pitt was chancellor of the exchequer, the King, in his speech from the throne, said, "I have carried into strict execution the several reductions in my civil list expenses, directed by an act of last session; I have introduced a farther reform in other departments, and suppressed several sinecure places in them. I have, by this means, so regulated my establishments, that my expenses shall not in future exceed my income."

Various petitions were presented in the course of the session for the repeal of the tax upon retail shops; and a motion was made by Sir Watkin Lewes for that purpose without effect, though the impost was somewhat mitigated by a reduction of the rates. An attempt was also made by Mr. Pulteney, to explain and amend the act of the last session, relative to hawkers and pedlars; particularly to repeal an oppressive clause, by which justices of the peace were empowered to imprison any person of this profession at their discretion. This was rejected, however, by a considerable majority. A bill for transferring part of the duties on foreign wines from the customs to the excise, (the duty having fallen off, Mr. Pitt stated, by the sum of 280,000*l.*, from what it had been in the middle of the century) was passed with general approbation, the terrible alarm excited by Sir Robert Walpole's memorable attempt to extend the laws of



excise, fifty years ago, having been apparently forgotten.

The affairs of India next occupied the chief attention of Parliament. A bill was brought in by Mr. Dundas, which, with some opposition, passed into a law, to explain and amend the act of 1784. This bill bestowed upon the governor-general of India the high prerogative of deciding in opposition to the sense of the majority of the council. The offices of commander-in-chief and governor-general were in future united in the same person; and Earl Cornwallis, who had borne so conspicuous a part in the American war, and whose character stood high in the public estimation, was nominated to fill this important commission. Soon after this Mr. Pitt, stating certain exigencies arising from the peculiar situation of the East India Company, moved that they be empowered to raise the sum of 2,000,000*l.* for the necessary increase of their capital. This also passed with little difficulty.

In the month of June, 1785, Mr. Hastings, late Governor of Bengal, arrived in England, when Mr. Burke gave notice of his intention to move, early in the ensuing session, for an investigation into his conduct. In undertaking the arduous task of public accuser against this supposed great Indian delinquent, the various difficulties to be encountered presented such a train of formidable obstacles, as only the perseverance and inflexibility of Mr. Burke could overcome. That powerful Indian interest which had defeated Mr. Fox, and effected the ruin of his administration, was to be exerted in vigorous hostility to the present measure; the opinions of administration were obviously in favour of the ex-governor; and the nation at large had long listened with cold indifference to the complaints of Indian delinquency, and

seemed to consider the present prosecution rather as the unrelenting efforts of party spirit, directed solely to the destruction of an individual, than an attempt to vindicate the justice and equity of Britain, by the exemplary punishment of a man, whose crimes, it was asserted, had deeply stained the national honour, and disgraced humanity. It may likewise be observed, that Mr. Burke could derive no encouragement to proceed from a review of former undertakings of a similar kind. The parliamentary prosecution of Lord Clive by General Burgoyne was early defeated. The verdict of the Court of King's Bench against the persons concerned in the imprisonment and death of Lord Pigot, could not be expected to impress the public mind with any idea of the enormity of Indian crimes. The bill of pains and penalties against Sir Thomas Rumbold was said to be inadequate to its object, and was abruptly abandoned by its author. Mr. Burke, however, was far from sinking under the pressure of circumstances so inauspicious; and on the 17th of February, 1786, he opened the business by desiring that the resolutions of the 28th of May, 1782, moved by Mr. Dundas, as chairman of the select committee, declaratory of the culpability of Mr. Hastings, and the consequent necessity of his recal, might be read. He expressed his deep regret, that the solemn and important business of that day had not been brought forward in the plenitude of weight and efficiency, by the original mover of these resolutions, and remarked on the various modes of proceeding which might be adopted. The first was a direction to the attorney-general to prosecute; but independently of the apparent disinclination of Mr. Arden, the attorney-general, to exert his powers in this cause, he did not conceive that a trial by jury was well calculated for the purpose

of obtaining justice against so elevated an offender. The second mode of prosecution was that by bill of pains and penalties. To this he had insuperable objections, as radically unjust, and as tarnishing, in no slight degree, the character of that House, the members of which would thus preposterously appear in the two-fold capacity of accusers and judges. The only alternative which remained was the ancient constitutional mode of proceeding by impeachment: as a necessary preparative to which, he concluded with moving for the papers necessary to substantiate the charge which he had in immediate contemplation to bring forward against the late Governor-general Hastings. Mr. Dundas affirmed, that though he had thought it expedient in the year 1782 to recal Mr. Hastings from India, he now rejoiced that the resolutions moved by him had not taken effect. Since that period Mr. Hastings had rendered most essential services to the company, and he should have extremely regretted to have been the means of depriving the company of a servant so distinguished by his zeal and capacity. Some difficulties were suggested by Mr. Pitt, respecting the production of the papers called for; but, ultimately, they were granted, with only a few exceptions; and on the 4th of April, Mr. Burke solemnly charged Warren Hastings, Esq. late governor-general of Bengal, with high crimes and misdemeanors in the execution of his office, exhibiting, at the same time, nine distinct articles of accusation, which in a few weeks were increased to the number of twenty-two. On the 1st of May Mr. Hastings, at his own desire, and by the indulgence of the House, was heard in his own defence; the minutes of which were ordered to lie on the table, and the examination of evidence was then proceeded in. The first article of the im-



peachment, respecting the Rohilla war, was brought before the House on the 1st of June; and, after a very long debate, the question was decided in favour of Mr. Hastings, by 119 against 67. On the 13th of June, the second charge, relative to the Rajah of Benares, being brought forward, it was resolved by the House, on a division of 119 to 79 voices, that this charge contained matter of impeachment against the late governor-general of Bengal. On the 11th of July an end was put to these proceedings for the present, by a prorogation of the Parliament, which was dismissed with assurances of the particular satisfaction with which the King had observed their diligent attention to the public business, and the measures they had adopted for improving the resources of the country.

On the 2d of August a singular incident occurred, which engrossed for a short time the attention of the public. As the King was alighting from his post-chariot, at the garden entrance of St. James's Palace, a woman decently dressed presented a paper to his Majesty; and while he was in the act of receiving it, she struck with a concealed knife at his breast. The King fortunately avoided the blow by drawing back; and as she was preparing to make a second thrust, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and the weapon was wrenched out of her hand. On examination before the privy-council, it immediately appeared that the woman was insane. Being asked where she had lately resided, she answered frantically, that she had been all abroad since that matter of the crown broke out. On being farther questioned as to what matter, she said, that the crown was her's; and that if she had not her right, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand generations. When interrogated as

to the nature of her right, she refused to answer, saying, that her rights were a mystery. It appeared that this poor maniac, whose name was Margaret Nicholson, had presented a petition ten days before, full of wild and incoherent nonsense, which had probably never been read, or the person of the petitioner would have been secured. The idea of prosecution was of course abandoned, and she was consigned to an apartment provided for her in Bethlehem Hospital. The lord-mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, and common-council of the city of London, went some days after in procession to St. James's, to present an address to his Majesty on his happy escape; an example which was followed by nearly all the corporate bodies throughout the kingdom.

In September his Majesty appointed a new committee of council, for the consideration of all matters relating to trade and foreign plantations. Of this board Mr. Charles Jenkinson, created Lord Hawkesbury, and constituted chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, was declared president. Under the auspices of this board, a treaty of commerce was signed between England and France on the 26th of September, on the basis of equality and reciprocity. The general principle was to admit the mutual importation and exportation of the commodities of each country at a very low *ad valorem* duty. The negotiator of this treaty was Mr. Eden, who was afterwards raised to the peerage, under the title of Baron Auckland, and who, under the coalition administration, had filled the lucrative office of vice-treasurer of Ireland. This was the first memorable defection from that unfortunate alliance.

About the same time a convention was signed with Spain, which finally terminated the long subsisting

disputes respecting the British settlements on the Mosquito shore and the coast of Honduras. By the present treaty the Mosquito settlements were formally and explicitly relinquished, as they had already virtually been by the sixth article of the general treaty of 1783. In return, the boundaries of the British settlements on the coast and bay of Honduras were somewhat extended. In a political view this convention answered a valuable purpose, as it removed a probable source of national disagreement; but the Mosquito settlers, who amounted to many hundred families in number, were commanded to evacuate the country in eighteen months, nothing farther being stipulated in their favour, than that his Catholic Majesty "shall order his governors to grant to the said English, so dispersed, all possible facilities for their removal to the settlements agreed upon by the present convention."

Parliament re-assembled on the 23d of January, 1787, but no subject of material import came under discussion till the 12th of February, when the House resolved itself into a committee on the commercial treaty with France. On this occasion, Mr. Pitt entered into an eloquent vindication of the measure. He declared in energetic terms his abhorrence of the maxim, that any nation was destined to be the natural and unalterable enemy of another. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of infernal malignity in our original frame. France, in most of our wars, had certainly been the aggressor; but her assurances and frankness in the present negotiation were such as to entitle her to a return of confidence. It was, indeed, ridiculous to imagine that the French would consent to yield advantages without the idea of compensation. The



treaty would doubtless be a benefit to them ; but he did not hesitate to say, it would be a much greater benefit to us. She gained for her wines and other productions a great and opulent market. We did the same for our manufactures to a far greater degree. She procured a market of 8,000,000 of people, we a market of 24,000,000. Both nations were disposed and prepared for such a connexion. France, by the peculiar dispensation of Providence, was gifted, perhaps more than any other country upon earth, with what made life desirable in point of soil, climate, and natural productions, in the most fertile vineyards and the richest harvests. Britain, on the other hand, possessing these advantages in an inferior degree, had, from the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws, risen to a state of commercial grandeur, and acquired the ability of supplying France with the requisite conveniences of life, in exchange for her natural luxuries. Though some plausible objections were suggested by the leaders of opposition against this measure, the only topic on which they insisted with any advantage, and indeed the only real difficulty respecting the execution of this treaty, arose from its inconsistency with the famous Methuen treaty, concluded with Portugal early in the present century, and in conformity to which, the duties on Portugal wines were to bear in future the proportion of only two-thirds of those imported from France and other countries. But this point being conceded by France in the progress of the business, the measure received, as it well deserved, the necessary concurrence and sanction of Parliament.

Another beneficial measure, though of inferior importance, was brought forward by Mr. Pitt for the

consolidation of the customs, by the total abolition of all the existing confused and complex duties, and substituting in their stead a single duty on each article, amounting, as nearly as possible, to the aggregate of the various subsidies previously paid; taking universally, instead of a fraction, the nearest integral number above it. By this method, he observed, there would be an increase in the revenue, to the amount of 20,000*l.* per annum, while the difference would be amply compensated to the merchant, by the ease and convenience with which he would be enabled to transact his business at the custom-house. Mr. Pitt, at the same time, proposed to lower the duties on foreign spirits, with a view of annihilating the smuggling trade, which, he said, amounted to 4,000,000 of gallons yearly, whilst that which was legally imported and paid duty, did not exceed 600,000 or 700,000. The whole of the plan obtained the sanction of a large majority of both Houses.

The chancellor of the exchequer, after stating the various frauds committed in the collection of the duty upon post-horses, proposed the farming of that duty, which was resisted as contrary to the principles of the constitution, and as being the mode adopted by the odious and despotic government of France, where the farmers-general acquired great fortunes, by the most shameful oppression exercised over the people. The bill, however, passed by a considerable majority. Mr. Fox, sometime afterwards, moved for the repeal of the tax imposed upon retail shops in the year 1785, which had excited great complaints, and a vigorous opposition throughout the nation. The whole sum assessed for this tax amounted to 59,000*l.* of which the cities of London and Westminster, and the adjacent parishes, paid 43,000*l.* whereas in some parts of

the kingdom not above 100*l.* was assessed for a whole county, and not above 50*l.* for a few. Mr. Pitt, however, declared, that his mind was not yet satisfied as to the pernicious operation of the tax, and the motion was lost by a majority of 183 against 147.

On the 28th of March Mr. Beaufoy, member for Great Yarmouth, a dissenter, held in great esteem by all parties, made a motion in the House of Commons, for the repeal of the corporation and test acts. His general arguments, and those of Mr. Fox, who ably supported the motion, were, that the test act was not originally intended to operate against the Protestant dissenters, but to prevent the intrigues and influence of the Popish party; that the dissenters had deserved well of the nation, and particularly of his Majesty's family, of whom, from the Revolution, they had been the most zealous supporters; that every man having an undoubted right to judge for himself in matters of religion, he ought not, on account of the exercise of that right, to incur any punishment, or be branded with any mark of infamy; and that the exclusion from military service, and civil trusts, was both a punishment and an opprobrious distinction. The corporation act, which passed in the year 1661, declared, that no person should be elected into any municipal office who should not, one year before his election, have taken the sacrament, according to the usage of the church of England. This act was levelled indiscriminately against Protestant and Catholic dissenters; but in the year 1673, the era of the test act, the face of things was materially changed. The jealousy of Parliament, in regard to the Protestant dissenters, had now subsided, and the alarm of all the different denominations of Protestants was equally excited by the danger to which Protestantism itself



was exposed, by the flagrant attempts of the court to effect the restoration of the Popish religion. The King himself was believed, on good ground, to be a concealed Papist. In this state of the nation the test act was passed, as a measure of general policy and safety. It was entitled, "An act for preventing the danger which may happen from Popish recusants;" and the dissenters, far from concurring in the opposition made by the court to this bill, publicly declared through the medium of Mr. Alderman Love, one of the members for the city of London, and himself a dissenter, that in a time of public danger, they would in nowise impede the progress of a measure, deemed essential to the safety of the kingdom, but would trust to the justice of Parliament, that a future provision should be made for their relief. On this motion the examples of Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Russia, Prussia, and all the dominions of the Emperor were cited, against the system of annexing civil disqualifications to religious opinions. In discussing the general policy of the corporation and test acts, Mr. Beaufoy observed, that from the members of the House of Peers no religious test was required, whence he strongly inferred the absurdity of the imposition in question. Mr. Pitt and Lord North urged, that the acts in question were meant to include both Papist and Protestant dissenters, and that the corporation act, in particular, was professedly made against the sectaries, and not against Papists, though it eventually included both. They contended that the interest of the established church might be endangered by the repeal proposed; and at length Mr. Beaufoy's motion was negatived by 178 against 100.

The attention of the House of Commons, and of the nation, was soon afterwards transferred to the state

of the Prince of Wales's finances. When his Royal Highness attained the age of twenty-one, in the year 1783, the sum of 50,000*l.* per annum was allotted to him, out of the civil list revenue, to defray the expense of his establishment. Considering the numerous salaries payable to the officers of his household, this sum was inadequate to the support of his rank and situation in life; and the then ministers, Mr. Fox and Lord North, strongly insisted upon the necessity of fixing his Royal Highness's revenue at 100,000*l.* per annum, which the late King had enjoyed as Prince of Wales, when the civil list produced 200,000*l.* per annum less than at present. To this the King positively objected; and the Prince, to prevent disagreeable consequences, declared, that he chose to depend upon the spontaneous bounty of the King. The result was, that the Prince, in the four years which had since elapsed, had contracted debts to a large amount, and his conduct was severely censured by the public for heedlessness and prodigality, it being too notorious that his Royal Highness was exempt from none of those youthful indiscretions and excesses by which men of high rank, in early life, are for the most part so unhappily characterised. A report of a very serious nature had also gained general credit, *viz.* that the Prince had contracted a secret marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, a lady of the Roman Catholic religion. Such a marriage, it is true, in whatever mode it was solemnized, could not, by the royal marriage act, be regarded as legal; in addition to which, by a clause in the act of settlement, should the legality of the marriage be affirmed, the Prince, by marrying a Papist, would forfeit his right of succession to the crown. His situation, therefore, was in the highest degree critical. Finding his embarrassments con-



tinually increasing, the Prince, in the summer of 1786, applied to the King for assistance ; but meeting with a refusal, he adopted a resolution highly to his honour. Suppressing the establishment of his household, he formally vested 40,000*l.* per annum of his revenue in the hands of trustees, for the liquidation of his debts. His race-horses, his hunters, and even his coach-horses, were sold by public auction ; and the elegant improvements and additions making to Carlton House were suddenly stopped, and the most splendid apartments shut up. In less than a month from the period in which he had discharged his household, the attempt was made on the life of the Sovereign as already related. The Prince was at Brighton when this event took place, and the account reached him by the information of a private friend. Without a moment's delay he travelled post to Windsor, and had an interview with her Majesty, upon which occasion it might have been expected, that the affection which naturally subsists between the parent and the child would have produced an instantaneous and perfect reconciliation ; they did not, however, see each other. The King knew that the Prince was in the house, but he did not think proper to summon him to his presence ; and the Prince, on his part, did not demand an interview, because court etiquette seemed to have placed the necessity of the first overture on the other side, and because he probably imagined that he had evinced, by his present visit, the tenderest solicitude for the welfare of his royal parent. To account for this apparent coldness on the part of his Majesty, it is necessary to observe, that the King was supposed to be displeased with the circumstance of the Prince having discharged his household without consulting his inclinations, or demanding his consent. It was



also generally believed that the King participated in the feelings of many of his subjects respecting Mrs. Fitzherbert. To counteract the effects of the rumoured marriage, it was absolutely necessary that the report should be contradicted by the person to whom it immediately related. In the present case, however, there were strong reasons for not adopting this expedient : the pride of the lady's family, the delicacy due to herself, seemed to require that a certain degree of mystery and silence should rest upon the transaction. From this combination of circumstances the coldness, reserve, and distance, unhappily subsisting for some time between his Majesty and the Prince, will find an easy solution.

The Prince, whose political connexions lay among the opposition, had lived in a state of retirement for near a twelvemonth, when he was persuaded to countenance a proposal for laying the state of his affairs before Parliament ; and on the 20th of April, in the present year, Mr. Alderman Newnham, member for the city of London, gave notice that he would bring forward a motion for an address to the King, praying him to take the situation of the Prince into consideration, and to grant him such relief as he in his wisdom should think fit, and pledging the House to make good the same. This occasioned an interesting conversation, and Mr. Newnham was earnestly entreated to withdraw his motion, as fertile of inconvenience and mischief. Mr. Pitt observed, that by the perseverance of Mr. Newnham, he should be driven to the disclosure of circumstances which he should otherwise have thought it his duty to conceal. Mr. Rolle, member for Devonshire, averred, that the investigation of this question involved in it circumstances which tended immediately to affect the constitution in church

and state. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and other gentlemen in the confidence of the Prince, declared, that there was nothing which the Prince of Wales less feared than a full and impartial investigation of his conduct; and nothing that his Royal Highness would more deprecate than a studied ambiguity, or affected tenderness, on the pretence of respect or indulgence. Mr. Rolle was called upon, though in vain, to explain the extraordinary language he had used. A few days afterwards, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the House to the declaration of Mr. Rolle. To what that declaration alluded, Mr. Fox said, it was impossible to ascertain, till the person who made it thought proper to explain his meaning: but he supposed it must refer to that base and malicious calumny which had been propagated without doors by the enemies of the Prince, with a view to depreciate his character, and injure him in the esteem of his country. Mr. Fox further declared, that the Prince had authorized him to assert, that, as a peer of Parliament, he was ready in the other House to submit to any of the most pointed questions that could be put to him upon the subject, or to afford the King or his ministers the fullest assurance of the utter falsehood of the fact in question. Mr. Rolle now thought proper to acknowledge that the subject upon which Mr. Fox had spoken was the matter to which he had alluded, as affecting both church and state. The reports, he said, relative to this transaction, had made a deep impression upon the minds of all men who loved and venerated the constitution. He knew that this thing could not have been accomplished under the formal sanction of law; but if it existed as a fact, it might be productive of the most alarming consequences, and ought to be satisfactorily cleared up. Mr. Fox replied, that he did not deny



the calumny in question merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but he denied it *in toto*, in fact as well as in law. The fact not only could never happen legally, but never did happen any way, and had, from the beginning, been a vile and malignant falsehood. Mr. Rolle asked, whether, in what he now asserted, Mr. Fox spoke from direct authority, to which the latter replied that he did. In consequence of these asseverations, Mr. Rolle was loudly called upon to express his satisfaction; but this he obstinately refused, saying only, that the House would judge for themselves of what had passed. Mr. Sheridan warmly declared, that if Mr. Rolle persisted in his refusal, or otherwise to put the matter into such a state of inquiry as *should* satisfy him, the House ought to come to a resolution, that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports injurious to the character of the Prince. Mr. Pitt here interposed, and protested against so flagrant an attack on the freedom of speech and deliberation in that House.

Subsequently to this discussion, at the desire of the King, an interview took place between the Prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt, at Carlton House; and the Prince was informed that if the intended motion were withdrawn, every thing might be settled to his Royal Highness's satisfaction. This being acceded to, a message was delivered from the King to the House, stating his Majesty's great concern that, from the accounts of the Prince of Wales, it appeared that he had incurred a debt to a very large amount, which, painful as it was to him to propose any addition to the burdens of his people, he was induced, by his paternal affection to the Prince, to desire the assistance of Parliament to discharge—on the well-grounded expectation, nevertheless, of the Prince's avoiding



to contract any similar debt in future; with a view to which, the King had directed a sum of 10,000*l.* to be paid out of the civil list, in addition to his former allowance. The next day, after the accounts referred to in the royal message were laid before the House, and of which the dignified generosity of Parliament suffered not the inspection, an address was voted to the King, to request him to direct the sum of 161,000*l.* to be paid out of the civil list for the full discharge of the debts of the Prince of Wales, and the farther sum of 20,000*l.* to complete the repairs of Carlton House.

During this period Mr. Hastings's impeachment was proceeding. Mr. Sheridan, on the 7th of February, opened the third charge, relative to the resumption of the jaghires, and the confiscation of the treasures of the Begums or Princesses of Oude, the mother and grandmother of the reigning Nabob. The subject was particularly favourable to a display of that kind of impassioned eloquence in which the orators of antiquity, when acting as public accusers, so much excelled; and it was universally agreed that never, in the British Senate, was a speech of this class delivered comparable to that with which Mr. Sheridan, during five hours and a half, rivetted the attention of a full House. Of its force it is scarcely possible, in a brief extract, to convey an idea. "The conduct of Mr. Hastings," he said, "respecting the Nabob and Begums of Oude, comprehended in it every species of human offence. He had been guilty of rapacity at once violent and insatiable, of treachery cool and premeditated, of oppression unprovoked, of barbarity wanton and unmanly. So long since as the year 1775, the Begum Princess, widow of Sujah ul Dowla, had written to Mr. Hastings in the following moving terms:—'If it is your pleasure that the mother of

the late Nabob, that myself, his other women, and his infant children, should be reduced to a state of dishonour and distress, we must submit. But if, on the contrary, you call to mind the friendship of the late blessed Nabob, you will exert yourself effectually in favour of us who are helpless.' Inflamed by disappointment at Benares, he hastened to the fortress of Chunar, to put in execution the atrocious design of instigating the Nabob, son of this Princess, to parricide and plunder. No sooner had Mr. Hastings determined to invade the substance of justice, than he resolved to avail himself of her judicial forms, and dispatched a messenger for the chief-justice of India to assist him in perpetrating the violence he had meditated. Without a moment's pause, or the shadow of process instituted, sentence was pronounced. And thus, at the same time that the sword of government was converted to an assassin's dagger, the pure ermine of justice was stained and soiled with the basest contamination. It was clear to demonstration, that the Begums were not concerned in the insurrection of Benares. No : their treasures were their treason. If the mind of Mr. Hastings were susceptible of superstition, he might image the proud spirit of Sujah ul Dowla looking down upon the ruin and devastation of his family ; beholding the palace which he had adorned with the spoils of the devoted Rohillas, plundered by his base and perfidious ally ; and viewing the man whom, on his death-bed, he had constituted the guardian of his wife, his mother, and his family, forcibly exposing those dear relations, the objects of his solemn trust, to the rigour of the merciless seasons, or the violence of the more merciless soldiery. Such were the awful dispensations of retributive justice ! It was not given to that House to witness the tremu-



lous joys of the millions whom the vote of that night would save from the cruelty of corrupted power. But the blessings of the people thus delivered would not be dissipated in empty air. No; they would lift up their prayers to Heaven in gratitude to the power, which, by stretching its mighty arm across the deep, had saved them from ruin and destruction." Though the speech of Mr. Sheridan excited a sensation in the House, which perhaps no degree of ministerial influence could have counteracted, it would be highly invidious to attribute the conduct of Mr. Pitt, on this occasion, to the dread of being left in a minority. On the contrary, he appeared penetrated with a conviction of the atrocity of the facts, and of the strength of the evidence by which they were supported: and the minister, who, in the comparatively insignificant business of an election return, could so far degrade himself as to vindicate an act of deliberate injustice, now felt all the sympathies of humanity, all the energies of virtue, awakened in his breast, and impelling him to testify, in terms the most explicit, his detestation of perfidy so vile, of cruelty so remorseless. On a division the numbers were, in favour of the motion 175, against it 68.

On the 2d of March Mr. Pelham opened the fourth charge, comprehending the corrupt and oppressive conduct of Mr. Hastings towards the Nabob of Fer-ruckabad, which was carried by 112 against 50. On the 15th the charge respecting contracts was brought forward by Sir James Erskine, and on this article the division was ayes 60, noes 26. The charge relative to Fyzoola Khan was introduced by Mr. Windham on the 22d, and was carried by 96 against 37. The seventh charge, respecting the corrupt receiving of bribes and presents, was opened, on the 2d of April,



by Mr. Sheridan; and on this occasion he observed, "that the late governor-general had, in every part of his conduct, exhibited proofs of a wild, eccentric, and irregular mind. He had been every thing by starts, and nothing long—now high and lofty, now mean and insidious,—now artful and temporising, now rigid and inflexible,—in pride, in passion, in all things changeable, except in corruption. His revenge was a tempest, a tornado blackening the horizon, and involving all within the sphere of its influence in one common destruction. But his corruption was regular and systematic, a monsoon blowing uniformly from one point of the compass, and wafting the wealth of India to the same port in one certain direction." Upon a division the numbers appeared ayes 165, noes 64. On the 19th the charge respecting the revenues was opened by Mr. Francis, who had formerly occupied the office of member of the supreme council in India, and who had recently taken his seat as a member of the House of Commons. He commenced by disclaiming all personal hostility towards Mr. Hastings, and affirmed that General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and himself, on their appointment as members of the council in 1773, went to Calcutta impressed with the most exalted idea of his public character, but were soon convinced of their mistake. Mr. Francis then entered into an elaborate discussion of the charge, enumerating the different modes of managing the revenues of Bengal, adopted by Mr. Hastings in the course of thirteen years. At the time of his accession to the government, the provinces had not perfectly recovered the effects of the dreadful famine which had taken place in Bengal at a very recent period; yet then did the committee of circuit, under the sanction of Mr. Hastings, raise the rents of the

zemindaries to an unheard-of standard ; and by the ensuing project of 1781, the whole landed property of the country was put up to a pretended auction ; the proprietors were universally deprived of their estates ; and banyans, cheats, and adventurers of all sorts, put into possession of their lands. Under this settlement Cantoo Baboo, Mr. Hastings's banyan, held farms to the amount of 135,000*l.* per annum. The directors had ordered the persons composing the committee of circuit to be prosecuted, but Mr. Hastings had ordered the prosecution to be withdrawn. A committee of revenue was subsequently introduced, under the influence of Gunga Govid Sing, a notorious and adroit villain, which completed the ruin of the country. When Mr. Hastings came into possession of the Bengal government, he found it a fertile, populous, and prosperous country ; it contained a regular gradation of ranks, like a pyramid, from a well ordered yeomanry to sovereign princes : but these distinctions have been broken down—the whole nation has been pounded as it were, by the oppression of the government, into one mass—and the Prince was no otherwise discoverable from the peasant than by the superiority of his sufferings, and the more pungent bitterness of his humiliations. Mr. Francis concluded in these words :—" My particular labour is now at an end. An unremitting perseverance of thirteen years has at last conducted me to that issue which has been the object of all my efforts. Mr. Hastings must now be impeached—let him have a fair trial—I desire no more. In arriving at that object, I have secured every personal purpose that I ever had in view ; the reputation of Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson, and myself, is secure ; your votes are my authority ; the House of Commons are



my compurgators. The only victory I ever aimed at was to clear my character from foul aspersion, and to establish, as I trust I have done, the integrity of my conduct in the estimation of my country." This charge was opposed on the ground that the House had already agreed on one nearly similar, the accepting of bribes and presents; and that it was not, in part, satisfactorily substantiated. The question was only confirmed by 71 against 55.

On the 9th of May the report made by Mr. Burke from the committee, to whom it had been referred to prepare the articles of impeachment, was confirmed by the House, ayes 175, noes 89; and, on the following day, it was voted that Mr. Hastings be impeached. Mr. Burke, accordingly, "in the name of the House of Commons, and of all the Commons of Great Britain," repaired to the bar of the House of Lords, and impeached Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors; at the same time acquainting their lordships, that the Commons would, with all convenient speed, exhibit articles against him, and make good the same. On the 14th another charge, respecting misdemeanors in Oude, was added to the former by Mr. Burke, and voted without a division. On the same day, the articles actually prepared were sent to the Lords; and on the 21st, Mr. Hastings, being conducted to the bar of that House by the serjeant at arms, was taken into the custody of the black rod, but, on the motion of the lord-chancellor, was admitted to bail—himself in 20,000*l.* and two sureties, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Sumner, in 10,000*l.* each: and he was ordered to deliver in an answer to the articles of impeachment in one month from that time, or upon the second day of the next session of Parliament.

The session was closed on the 30th of May, when



the King delivered a speech, commending the measures taken by Parliament respecting the reduction of the national debt, and the treaty of navigation and commerce with the most Christian King. He spoke of the general tranquillity of Europe, and lamented the dissensions which unhappily prevailed amongst the States of the United Provinces.

During the recess of Parliament, the attention of government was particularly attracted by the troubled state of Holland, the dissensions which had long subsisted between the Stadtholder and the States having risen to an alarming height, and the ultimate event of the contest seeming to depend greatly on the forbearance or interposition of foreign nations. The French were known to be friendly to the States of Holland, but they were too deeply engaged, by their domestic situation, to be able to render them any effectual assistance. On the other hand, the cause of the Stadtholder was warmly espoused by the King of Prussia, in conjunction with Great Britain. In June, 1787, for reasons which have never perfectly transpired, the Princess of Orange, then resident at Nimeguen, a lady possessing the vigour of character belonging to the royal house of Prussia, adopted the bold and hazardous resolution of proceeding in person to the Hague, where the States General were at that time assembled, accompanied only by the Baroness de Wassanaer, and a few domestics. As might previously be expected, she was arrested in her progress at about a league beyond Schoonhoven, and forced back to Nimeguen. If the King of Prussia recommended this journey with a view of drawing from it, as was generally believed, some plausible ground of interfering in behalf of the house of Orange, it fully answered his intention, for this incident brought mat-

ters to a crisis. On the 10th of July a memorial was addressed by the Prussian monarch to the States of Holland, in which he affected to consider the indignity offered to the Princess of Orange, his sister, as a personal insult to himself; and to avenge this affront, the Duke of Brunswick, who commanded the Prussian forces in the contiguous Duchy of Cleves, entered Holland, at the head of 20,000 men, on the 13th of September. Notwithstanding the previous probability of this invasion, the consternation of the Dutch nation was extreme, and the country seemed everywhere unprepared for resistance. Utrecht, distinguished beyond all other cities of the Union by the violence of her democratic zeal, surrendered almost as soon as summoned, and the march of the Prussian general bore the appearance of a triumphal procession. While a futile resolve to suspend the office of Stadtholder passed the Senate of Amsterdam, Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven, and other towns in his route, submitted tamely to the conqueror. On the seventh day from the commencement of the invasion, the Prince of Orange made his public entry into the Hague. In Amsterdam, alone, the resolution was adopted of attempting a defence; but on the 10th of October, being closely invested, its gates were opened to a foreign garrison. To the astonishment of the world, that republic which had maintained a contest of eighty years against the power of Spain; which contended for the empire of the ocean with Great Britain; which repulsed the attacks of Louis the Fourteenth in the zenith of his glory, was over-run by the arms of Prussia in a single month. In this transaction Prussia acted in avowed concert with England; and on this occasion the British government concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Land-

grave of Hesse Cassel, by which the latter engaged to furnish England with a body of 12,000 men at four weeks notice, for 36,000*l.* per annum. So late as the month of September, and just before the Duke of Brunswick began his march, France tardily professed her intention of assisting the Dutch in case they were attacked by any foreign power. This only animated the court of London to act with the greater spirit, and vigorous naval preparations were made to support the King of Prussia, in opposition to the menacing declarations of France. The object of the Prussian expedition, however, being accomplished in a much shorter space of time than could have been imagined, the court of Versailles found itself disengaged from all obligations. The Duke of Dorset, ambassador at Paris, in consequence of the events which had taken place, presented, on the 27th of October, a memorial to the King of France, signifying, that no subject of discussion, much less of contest, remaining between the two courts, he was authorized to ask, whether it was the intention of his most Christian Majesty to carry into effect the notification made by his plenipotentiary, which, by announcing that succours would be given to Holland, had occasioned the naval armaments on the part of his Britannic Majesty, which armaments had been reciprocal. If the court of Versailles was disposed to explain itself satisfactorily on the subject, the ambassador proposed that all warlike preparations should be discontinued, and that the navies of the two nations should be again placed on the footing of the peace establishment, as it stood on the 1st of January preceding. To this memorial the Count de Montmorin, the new minister for foreign affairs in France, replied on the very same day, in a style of extraordinary moderation, that the



intention of his Majesty not being, and never having been, to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland, the communication made to the court of London, on the 16th of the last month, having had no other object than to announce to that court an intention, the motives to which no longer existed, especially since the King of Prussia had imparted his resolution, his Majesty made no scruple to declare, that he would not give any effect to the declaration above mentioned, and agreed with pleasure to the proposal of mutually disarming, made on the part of his Britannic Majesty.

In consequence of these transactions, it was found necessary to assemble the British Parliament somewhat earlier than usual in time of peace; and on the 27th of November, the King, in opening the sittings, remarked, that, at the close of the last session, he had informed them of the concern with which he observed the disputes unhappily subsisting in the republic of the United Provinces. Their situation soon afterwards became more critical and alarming. The King of Prussia having demanded satisfaction for the insult offered to the Princess of Orange, his sister, the party which had usurped the government applied to the most Christian King for assistance; and that prince having notified to his Majesty his intention of granting their request, the King gave immediate orders for augmenting his forces both by sea and land; and, in the course of this transaction, he had concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. In the mean time, the rapid success of the Duke of Brunswick enabled the Provinces to deliver themselves from the oppression under which they laboured; and all subjects of contest being thus removed, an amicable explanation had taken place

between the courts of London and Versailles. The addresses in answer to the speech were voted with great unanimity in both Houses; and the subsidy to Hesse passed without a dissentient vote. Mr. Fox took credit to himself for having always maintained the opinion, that this country ought to assume an active and vigorous part in preserving the balance of power in Europe, as well as for having warned the House against the perfidious designs of France, in contradiction to those assertions of her amicable disposition which had been made when the commercial treaty was in agitation.

In a short time treaties of alliance were concluded between the courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague; by which the two former guaranteed the Stadtholderate in perpetuity to the serene house of Orange, as an essential part of the constitution of the United Provinces. By the treaty between the Kings of Great Britain and Prussia, each of the high contracting powers engaged, in case of attack, to furnish the other with a succour of 16,000 infantry and 4000 cavalry, or an equivalent in money, within the term of two months from the date of the requisition.

The army establishment, which had been reduced from seventy to sixty-four regiments at the termination of the war, was now raised to the customary complement. A great naval promotion had also taken place, in the contemplation of a war with France; in which sixteen captains had been selected for flags, while a much greater number had been passed over in silence and neglect. A motion was consequently made in the House of Commons, "that the House should resolve itself into a committee, to inquire into the conduct of the admiralty in the business of the late promotion." This motion was negatived by a

very small majority; and the first lord of the admiralty, Lord Howe, became the subject of very severe censure. His lordship soon afterwards resigned, and was succeeded by the Earl of Chatham. About the same time the Earl of Mansfield resigned the chief-justiceship of England, which he had held with high reputation thirty-two years. The vacancy thus made was supplied by the attorney-general, Sir Lloyd Kenyon, created Lord Kenyon.

The most considerable legislative measure of the present session, related to a controversy which had arisen between the board of control and the East India Company. At the moment of the general alarm excited by the affairs of Holland, government proposed to the directors to send out four regiments of the King's troops, as a reinforcement to the army in India, upon condition that the whole expense was defrayed by the company. This proposal was at first partly accepted, but the rumour of war having subsided, the matter was re-considered and finally rejected. The directors contended, that Lord North's bill of 1781 expressly provided, that the company should pay only for such troops as by *their* requisition should be sent to India; and the opinion of different eminent lawyers, who had been consulted on the subject, appeared perfectly to coincide with them; part of the troops, however, were already prepared for embarkation, and the company refused to admit them on board their ships. Mr. Pitt, in consequence, moved, on the 25th of February, 1788, to bring in a bill for removing the doubts in question, and for declaring that the intention of the legislature, in the act of 1784, was agreeable to the construction put upon it by the board of control. This act had proved, as had been foretold, a source of perpetual altercation and



dispute between the boards of direction and control; and an attempt to explain and determine its sense, by a declaratory law, was an unanswerable proof of its imperfections. The measure was most formidably opposed. Mr. Sheridan called upon the House to compare the power of Mr. Fox's commissioners with those which were now asserted to belong to the board of control. Lord Fitzwilliam could not send out a dispatch; he could neither declare war, nor make peace in India; he could neither collect the revenues of the company, nor apply them to the purposes he should think proper, without having first the pleasure of the King signified to him through the medium of the secretary of state. The board of control could do all this. Mr. Burke desired to be informed by administration, whether, when they brought in the act of 1784, and complained that Mr. Fox's bill took too much, they had honestly stated, that all they meant to take was the military power, the political direction, the management of the revenue, and as much as they could get of the commerce? The question of commitment was carried by a majority of 57 voices only; and in the House of Lords it also experienced a violent opposition, but was carried by 71 against 28. A protest, signed by sixteen peers, reprobated the declaratory bill as friendly to corrupt intrigue and cabal, hostile to all good government, and abhorrent to the principles of our constitution.

In the early part of the session, Mr. Hastings had delivered in his answer to the impeachment of the Commons, who immediately appointed a committee of managers to make good the same, and the trial commenced on the 13th of February, 1788, in Westminster Hall, which was fitted up for the purpose with great magnificence. Two days being occupied in

reading the articles of impeachment and the answers to them, Mr. Burke, on the 15th, opened the cause, in a speech which occupied four days. The managers of the impeachment having then stated their intention to proceed to a conclusion of each article of the charge singly, on both sides, before another was entered upon, this mode was objected to by Mr. Hastings's counsel, and, after a vigorous debate by the Lords, a large majority determined that the whole of the charges collectively should be gone through by the impeachers, before the accused should be called upon to make his defence. On the 22d of February, the Benares charge was opened by Mr. Fox, and concluded on the 25th by Mr. Grey, member for Northumberland, afterwards Lord Grey, whose early talents attracted, in a considerable degree, the attention of the House. On the 15th of April the charge relative to the Begums of Oude was brought forward by Mr. Adam, the evidence on which was summed up by Mr. Sheridan; and on the 15th of June, being the 35th day of sitting, the court adjourned to the first Tuesday after the next meeting of Parliament.

It was also determined, early in the session, to institute a similar process against Sir Elijah Impey, chief-justice of the supreme court established by the regulating act of 1773, and six articles of impeachment were accordingly exhibited to the House by Sir Gilbert Elliot. On the 4th of February Sir Elijah was permitted to make his defence at the bar of the House, which he performed at great length, and with great ability. On the 28th of April Sir Gilbert entered upon his summary of the charge; and, after much discussion, the first charge was negatived, and the consideration of the remainder postponed for three months.

On the 6th of May Mr. Grenville obtained leave to bring in a bill to limit the number of groundless petitions for undue elections, by empowering the election committee to adjudge that a party presenting a petition which should turn out frivolous, or offering a frivolous defence to a petition, should pay reasonable costs. Also to lay down a rule for establishing the rights of election, and rendering them immutable. The bill was immediately brought in, and passed. On the 8th of June Mr. Pitt stated a proposition for adjusting the claims of the American loyalists, and a sum amounting to about 1,340,000*l.* was voted to them.

Towards the close of the session a bill was brought into the House of Commons by Sir William Dolben, member for the University of Oxford, to regulate the transportation of slaves from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. Early in the year a multitude of petitions had been presented from the different towns, cities, and counties of the kingdom, imploring the abolition of that traffic. A motion on the subject of these petitions was expected to be made by Mr. Wilberforce, member for Yorkshire; but in consequence of the long protracted indisposition of that gentleman, Mr. Pitt, on the 9th of May, moved a resolution importing that the House would, early in the next session, proceed to take into consideration the state of the slave trade. The bill of Sir William Dolben, which was intended merely to establish a certain reasonable proportion between the number of the slaves and the tonnage of the ships, was violently opposed by the merchants of London and Liverpool, concerned in the African trade. Counsel was therefore engaged and witnesses examined, when it appeared in evidence at the bar of the House, that five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth, was



the average space allotted to each slave. The lower deck of the vessel was entirely covered with bodies. The space between the floor of that deck and the roof above, in height about five feet eight inches, was divided by a platform, also covered with human bodies. The slaves were chained two and two by their hands and feet, and by means of ring-bolts fastened to the deck. In that sultry climate their allowance was a pint of water each *per diem*; and they were usually fed twice a day with yams and horse-beans. After meals they were compelled by the whip to jump in their irons, which, by the slave dealers, was called dancing. They had not, when stowed together, so much room as a man in his coffin, either in length or breadth. They drew their breath with laborious and painful efforts, and many died of suffocation. The customary mortality of the voyage exceeded seventeen times the usual estimate of human life. In reviewing this detestable traffic, Mr. Pitt declared, that if, as had been asserted by the members for Liverpool, the trade could not be carried on in any other manner, he would retract what he had said on a former day, and, waving every farther discussion, give his instant vote for the annihilation of a traffic thus shocking to humanity. He trusted that the House, being now in possession of such evidence as was never before exhibited, would endeavour to extricate themselves from the guilt and remorse which every man ought to feel, for having so long overlooked such cruelty and oppression. The bill was carried up, on the 18th of June, to the House of Lords, where it encountered the determined opposition of Lord Thurlow. His lordship said, that the bill was full of inconsistency and nonsense. The French had lately offered premiums to encourage the African trade,

and the natural presumption was, that we ought to do the same. The Duke of Chandos ventured to predict a general insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies, in consequence of the agitation of the present question; and Lord Sidney, who had once ranked among the friends of liberty, expressed, in warm terms, his admiration of the system of the slave laws established in Jamaica, and saw no room for any improvement. The bill, however, was well supported, and finally passed by a considerable majority.

The King put an end to the session on the 11th of July, by a speech from the throne, in which he complimented the two Houses on their attention and liberality. His faithful subjects had every reason, he said, to expect the continuance of the blessings of peace, and the engagements which he had recently formed with the King of Prussia and the States General of the United Provinces would, he trusted, promote the security and welfare of his own dominions, and contribute to the general tranquillity of Europe.

On the 31st of January died at Rome, at the age of sixty-seven years, Prince Charles Edward Lewis Casimir Stuart, eldest son of the late Pretender to the throne of Great Britain. He was commonly known on the Continent by the name of the Chevalier de St. George, and in England by that of the young Pretender. On the demise of his father, in the year 1765, he took upon himself the appellation of King, but this title was not acknowledged by any of the Sovereigns of Europe. He married a princess of the house of Stolberg, by whom he left no issue; but his property, which was considerable, he bequeathed to a natural daughter, whom he had created Duchess of

Albany. To his brother, Cardinal York, the sole survivor of the royal house of Stuart, he left his empty pretensions to the crown of England.

This year having completed a century from the Revolution, the memory of that event was celebrated in various parts of the kingdom by rejoicings and thanksgivings, some of which were observed with more than usual solemnity.

The period of the recess was rendered memorable by the first occurrence of that mental malady which threw so deep a gloom upon the close of this reign. Soon after the prorogation, the King, who had been for some time indisposed, was advised by his physicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham, which he was believed to drink in too profuse a quantity. His health appeared, however, during his residence there, greatly improved; but soon after his arrival at Windsor, late in the summer, his illness returned with new and alarming symptoms, and, by the end of October, it could no longer be concealed that his malady was of a nature peculiarly afflictive and dreadful. A mental derangement had taken place, which rendered him totally incapable of public business. Parliament stood prorogued to the 20th of November; and, on the 14th of that month, circular letters were addressed by the ministers to the members of the legislature, signifying that the indisposition of the Sovereign rendered it doubtful whether there would be a possibility of receiving his commands for a farther prorogation, and earnestly requesting the attendance of the members. Parliament being accordingly assembled, the state of the King's health was formally notified to the House of Peers by the lord-chancellor, and to the Commons by Mr. Pitt; and as the session could not be opened in the regular mode, an adjournment of



fourteen days was recommended and agreed to. Upon the re-assembling of Parliament on the 4th of December, a report of the board of privy-council was presented to the two Houses, containing an examination of the royal physicians; and it was suggested, that, considering the extreme delicacy of the subject and the person concerned, Parliament would do well to rest satisfied without any more direct and express information, especially as the examinations of council had been taken upon oath, which the House of Commons had no power to administer: doubts, however, were started by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and others of the same party, whether Parliament could, in this momentous case, dispense with that sort of evidence on which they had been accustomed to proceed. As the minister's chief object was procrastination, the objection was too acceptable to be warmly contested, and a committee of twenty-one persons in each House was appointed to examine and report the sentiments of the royal physicians. The report of the committee was laid upon the table of the House of Commons on the 10th of December, when a motion was made by Mr. Pitt for the appointment of another committee, to inspect the journals for precedents of such proceedings as had been adopted in former instances, when the sovereign authority was suspended by sickness, infirmity, or any other cause. Mr. Fox opposed the motion as calculated only for delay. With respect to precedents, there were none, he said, which applied to the present case, and all that was requisite to their ultimate decision had been obtained by the report now lying on the table. He advanced as a proposition deducible from the principles of the constitution, and the laws of hereditary succession, that whenever the Sovereign was incapable of exercising

the functions of his high office, the heir-apparent, if of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive authority, in the name and on the behalf of the Sovereign, during his incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise. Mr. Pitt immediately rose, and with much warmth declared, that the assertion which had been made by Mr. Fox was little short of treason against the constitution; he pledged himself to prove that the heir-apparent had no more right, in such a case, to the exercise of the executive power than any other person; and that it belonged entirely to the two remaining branches of the legislature to make such provision for supplying the temporary deficiency as they might think proper. When the regular exercise of the powers of government was from any cause suspended, to whom, he asked, could the right of providing a remedy for the existing defect devolve, but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To assert an inherent right in the Prince of Wales to assume the government, was virtually to revive those exploded ideas of the divine and indefeasible authority of princes, which had so justly sunk into contempt, and almost into oblivion. Kings and princes derive their power from the people, and to the people alone, through the organ of their representatives, did it appertain to decide in cases for which the constitution had made no specific or positive provision. Thus was this question at issue between those two great political rivals, in which it was remarkable that Mr. Fox, the great advocate of the rights of the people, appeared to lean to prerogative, and Mr. Pitt, who had been loudly accused of deserting the principles of liberty, stood forth as their intrepid and zealous assertor. All those popular arguments and primary



axioms of government, on which the friends of freedom delight to dwell, were upon this occasion urged, by Mr. Pitt, with energy and eloquence: this, however, was idle declamation, because extraneous to the subject. The primary principles of government formed no part of the present controversy. The question was simply, whether in the appointment of a regent, to supply a defect in the executive power, admitted to be occasioned by a new case, where they have neither precedent nor authority to guide their decision, they were to exercise a judicial or an elective authority. If the former, the business was at an end, for they must necessarily adjudge the regency to the Prince; but if they were to exercise an arbitrary elective power, Mr. Pitt might even make himself the competitor of the Prince of Wales; he had, however, no other object than that of placing the authority of the Regent under such strict and embarrassing limitations, as to render the dismissal of himself and his colleagues a matter of extreme difficulty, or at least to facilitate their return to power. Mr. Fox, on the other hand, by asserting strongly the unqualified succession of the Prince of Wales, hoped to defeat the project; and some progress was even made in the formation of a new administration, consisting of the principal members of the former coalition ministry, Lord North only excepted. The motion of Mr. Pitt for a committee to examine into precedents being carried in the Commons, Lord Camden proposed a similar one the next day in the Lords, which also passed without a division. His lordship took this opportunity of severely reprobating the doctrine of Mr. Fox, which was defended by Lords Loughborough and Stormont with considerable ability.

Whatever has the appearance of supporting the



democratic branch of the constitution against the claims of prerogative is always popular, but it is not always the most favourable to liberty. To superficial observers, it seems an extension of the people's rights; but it is only by recurring to the first principles of government, and of the constitution, that its real tendency can be ascertained. To invest the Houses of Parliament with the power of regulating the executive department of government, whenever the usual succession, from accidental causes, suffers any interruption, may appear, at first view, only consistent with those enlarged principles of liberty on which the basis of all legitimate government ought to be constructed; but it should not be forgotten, that the same reasoning might be extended to the succession in general. The name or title of the supreme magistrate is of little importance, provided he governs according to established laws, the object of which is the welfare of the people; and if the executive department can be conducted under closer restrictions than are at present established, will it not follow, that the restrictions should be made permanent, and bind the Sovereign as well as the Regent? The sole object of government is the welfare and protection of the community; it is only a matter of dispute, with what prerogatives and powers it is necessary to invest the first officer of the state, in order to enable him to fulfil the functions of his important station, and to carry on, without vexatious interruption, the proper business of the nation. But if certain privileges and prerogatives are necessary in the one case, are they not equally so in the other? The sovereign authority is not a property, but an office; to execute that office, certain powers are necessary; whoever exercises it, under whatever name he acts, should be

possessed of those necessary powers; and no man, under any title or denomination, ought to be invested with more than are necessary. Such appears to be the only clear and obvious point of view in which the question of the regency can be placed; and from this view it must be concluded, that the same rule of succession ought to be established as in the case of the demise of the crown. The only circumstance that creates a material difference between the regular succession to the sovereignty, and that to the regency, and the chief point in the latter case to be secured, is, that the legal possessor shall not be excluded from a resumption of his proper authority, whenever the existing impediment shall be removed. For this the faith, integrity, and character of the two other branches of the legislature would have been solemnly pledged; and on these, in every event, the matter must have ultimately depended.

This short statement will serve to illustrate the different opinions supported on this subject by Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt; the former asserted, that the Prince of Wales had an *absolute right* to succeed to the regency, while the latter admitted only that he had an *irresistible claim*: and from what has been remarked on the particular views of each of these great parliamentary leaders, the difference was more than verbal. It will serve, at the same time, to supersede the necessity of entering into a detail of the long and generally uninteresting parliamentary debates which succeeded. As it was evident, from the complexion of both Houses, that the Prince's claim, as of right, to the regency, would have been resisted to the utmost, it was not thought advisable to bring the subject to a formal decision, and on the 15th of December, the Duke of York, in the name of the Prince,

expressed his wishes that the question might be waved. His Royal Highness said that no claim of right had been advanced by the Prince of Wales ; and he was confident that his brother too well understood the sacred principles which seated the house of Brunswick upon the throne, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, that was not derived from the will of the people, expressed by their representatives. He was followed to the same effect by the Duke of Gloucester. Lord Thurlow, who had at first consented to take a part in the regency administration, now spoke with great energy of his sentiments of affection towards the King. Nothing could be more disgraceful, he said, than to desert the Sovereign in his distressed and helpless situation. His own debt of gratitude was ample ; and when he forgot his King might God forget him. These expressions were whispered to be the result of certain intimations which his lordship had received, of the happy and not very distant prospect of the King's recovery. This was, however, only a matter of speculation.

So confident were ministers in their strength, that on the 16th, the House being in a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Pitt moved three resolutions, the object of which was to declare that, his Majesty being prevented by indisposition from attending to public business, it was the right and duty of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons of Great Britain, to provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority. A vehement debate ensued, in the course of which Mr. Fox declared the principles of the minister to be, that the monarchy was indeed hereditary, but that the executive power ought to be elective: the legal metaphysics that thus distinguished between the crown and



its functions, were to him unintelligible. The investigators should be schoolmen, and not statesmen, if a question that so deeply involved the existence of the constitution were to be thus discussed. "Where," said he, "is that famous *dictum* to be found by which the crown is guarded with inviolable sanctity, while its powers are left to the mercy of every assailant? The Prince, it is asserted, has no more right than another person, and at the same time it is acknowledged that Parliament is not at liberty to think of any other Regent; and all this paradoxical absurdity for the paltry triumph of a vote over a political antagonist." The second resolution was carried by 268 against 204; and the third, empowering the chancellor of Great Britain to affix the great seal to such bills of limitations as might be necessary to restrict the power of the future Regent, passed on the 23d. This mode of procedure was warmly opposed by Lord North. "A person," said his lordship "is to be set up without power or discretion, and this pageant, this fictitious being, is to give the force of a law to the decisions of the two Houses. Was it ever before heard of, that there could be a power of giving assent without the power of refusing that assent? Would any man seriously maintain that the third estate, thus conjured up, is really distinct from the other two?" Mr. Dempster moved an amendment, "that the Prince of Wales be requested to take upon himself the administration of the government during the royal incapacity," which was negatived by 251 to 178. In the Lords a similar amendment was moved by Lord Rawdon, but after a violent debate the resolutions were confirmed.

On the 2d of January, 1789, Mr. Cornwall, speaker of the House of Commons, expired, and the House, in

consequence, adjourned to the 5th, when two members were proposed for the appointment, the Hon. W. Grenville, brother to Lord Temple, and Sir Gilbert Elliot. On a division, the former was chosen by 215 votes to 144; and amid the pressure of affairs so much more important, the irregularity of entering upon the duties of the office without the previous sanction of royal approbation, was scarcely noticed.

The plan of limitations, when ready to be brought into the House, was obstructed by a motion of Mr. Loveden on the 6th of January, that the physicians be re-examined on the subject of the King's illness, and the probability of recovery. This motion, which was the result of various reports respecting a disagreement of opinion among the physicians themselves, gave rise to a second report, which left the House, with regard to the event, as much in the dark as ever, answering no other purpose than to create delay, of which the minister well knew the advantage. A letter was, however, at length written to the Prince of Wales by Mr. Pitt, informing his Royal Highness of the plan meant to be pursued: that the care of the King's person and the disposition of the royal household should be committed to the Queen, who would by this means be vested with the patronage of 400 places, amongst which were the great offices of lord-steward, lord-chamberlain, and master of the horse: that the power of the Prince should not extend to the granting any office, reversion, or pension, for any other term than during the King's pleasure, nor to the conferring any peerage. The answer of the Prince was firm, dignified, and temperate. It was with deep regret, he said, that he perceived in the propositions of administration, a project for producing weakness, disorder, and insecurity in every



branch of the administration of affairs—a project for dividing the royal family from each other—for separating the court from the state, and therefore, by disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support, a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity. He observed, that the plea of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which called for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power or its representative, or which could justify the Prince in consenting that, in his person, an experiment should be made to ascertain with how small a portion of the kingly power the executive government of this country could be conducted. In fine, the Prince declared, that his conviction of the evils which might otherwise arise, outweighed in his mind every other consideration, and would determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by that melancholy necessity, which, of all the King's subjects, he deplored the most.

A series of propositions respecting the limitations were brought into the House of Commons, by Mr. Pitt, on the 16th of January. In one of the long and violent debates which ensued, Mr. Burke pronounced this to be no other than a solemn mockery of royalty, when it was known to the whole world that Providence, in its inscrutable wisdom, had hurled the Monarch from his throne, and had reduced him to a state in which he was the object of compassion to the meanest of his subjects. The propositions at length passed the Commons by a large majority, but the contest in the Lords was extremely obstinate; and a



protest was entered on the 23d of January upon the journals of the House, signed by the Dukes of York and Cumberland, and fifty-five other peers, expressive of their highest indignation at the restrictions on the executive authority thus arbitrarily imposed. A committee, appointed by the two Houses, then presented the resolutions to the Prince, who, though evidently dissatisfied, declared his acceptance of them. He expressed himself sensible of the difficulties which must attend the execution of the trust reposed in him, in the peculiar circumstances in which it was committed to his charge, "of which," said his Royal Highness, "as I am acquainted with no former example, my hopes of a successful administration cannot be founded on any past experience." He also expressed his confidence that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority were intended by the two Houses only as a temporary measure, founded on the loyal hope, in which he ardently participated, that his Majesty's disorder might not be of long duration. On the following day, January the 31st, Lord Camden moved, "with a view to restore the efficacy of legislation," that the lord-chancellor be directed, by authority of the two Houses of Parliament, to issue a commission in the name of the Sovereign for opening the session, consisting of the princes of the blood and all the great officers of state. This finally passed both Houses, but the princes expressly refused to suffer their names to appear on the commission; the session, however, was opened in form by the lords commissioners on the 3d of February, and the bill, founded on the propositions already agreed upon, passed the House of Commons on the 12th, with some amendments and variations, the peerage clause, in particular, being limited to three years.

Happily for the nation, these extraordinary measures were arrested in their progress by an official intimation from the lord-chancellor, that the King was declared by his physicians to be in a state of convalescence. An adjournment of all farther proceedings in the bill immediately took place; and for nearly three weeks a total suspension of all Parliamentary business ensued. This was followed by a declaration on the 10th of March, that his Majesty, being perfectly recovered from his indisposition, had ordered a commission to be issued for holding the Parliament in the usual manner. The news of the King's recovery diffused the most general satisfaction, and the 23d of April was appointed as a day of national thanksgiving, when his Majesty went in grand procession to St. Paul's Cathedral, to offer up his grateful devotions on this event, which was celebrated throughout the kingdom by splendid illuminations, and other demonstrations of joy, to an unprecedented extent.

The conduct of the Irish Parliament, in this business, formed a striking contrast to that of the English. The indisposition of the Sovereign being ascertained, Mr. Conolly moved, on the 11th of February, that an address be presented to the Prince of Wales, requesting him immediately to take upon himself the government of that kingdom, as Regent, during the continuance of the King's incapacity, which was carried without a division. This resolution the House of Lords confirmed by a majority of 19; but the lord-lieutenant, the Marquis of Buckingham, (late Earl Temple,) refused to transmit the address to England, and commissioners were appointed, by both Houses, to present it in person to the Prince of Wales, who in his reply assured them, that nothing could obli-

terate from his memory the sentiments of gratitude which he felt for their generous kindness.

The British Parliament, as already intimated, was opened by commission ; and, in the speech which was delivered by the chancellor in the name of the King, his Majesty conveyed to the two Houses his warmest acknowledgments, for the additional proofs they had given of their attachment to his person, and their concern for the honour and interests of his crown. The late proceedings of the ministry were evidently acceptable to the Sovereign ; and those persons holding posts under the government, who had concurred in the measures of the opposition, were unceremoniously dismissed from their offices : amongst them were the Marquis of Lothian, the Duke of Queensbury, Lord Carteret, and Lord Malmesbury.

One of the first motions was that of Mr. Fox for the repeal of the shop tax ; and as Mr. Pitt did not choose any longer to refuse his assent, it was this time successful. Mr. Dempster, at the same time, moved for a repeal of the hawkers' and pedlars' tax, which could not be obtained ; but a bill passed to explain and amend the act, by which the more oppressive clauses were mitigated. Mr. Beaufoy, on the 8th of May, again renewed his motion for the repeal of the corporation and test acts, prompted, he said, by the unalterable confidence which the dissenters reposed in the disposition of the House to do justice to the injured, and to afford relief to the oppressed. Mr. Fox supported this motion with a force of argument which made a great impression upon his hearers. He laid it down, as a primary axiom of policy, that no human government had jurisdiction over opinions as such, and more particularly religious opinions. It had no right to presume that it knew them, and much



less to act upon that presumption. When opinions were productive of acts injurious to society, the law knew where and how to apply the remedy. If the reverse of this doctrine were adopted, if the actions of men were to be prejudged from their opinions, it would sow the seeds of everlasting jealousy and distrust; it would give the most unlimited scope to the malignant passions; it would excite each man to divine the opinions of his neighbour, to deduce mischievous consequences from them, and then to prove that he ought to incur disabilities, to be fettered with restrictions, to be harassed with penalties. Every extravagance of religious hate, every system of political persecution, and every species of party zeal, had flowed from this intolerant principle. Mr. Fox declared himself a friend to an establishment of religion in every country, framed agreeably to the sentiments of the majority of its inhabitants, but to invest that establishment with a monopoly of civil and religious privileges was, he said, palpably unjust. Indulgence to other sects, a candid respect for their opinions, a desire to promote charity and good-will, were the best proofs that any religion could give of its Divine origin. The motion was opposed by Lord North and Mr. Pitt, and was negatived by 122 against 102.

Lord Stanhope next introduced a bill into the House of Peers, for the repeal of a number of obsolete laws, inflicting penalties upon persons absenting themselves from the service of the church, speaking in derogation of the Book of Common Prayer, using sorcery, &c. which, he observed, were a disgrace to our statute books. Dr. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, decidedly opposed the measure, and contended, that if unrestrained speaking, writing, and publishing on the subject of religion were tolerated,

there was scarcely any mischief to the church or to civil society that imagination could frame, which might not be effected. The very foundation of religion, as by law established, might be undermined and overthrown. Dr. Horseley, Bishop of St. David's, declared that the bill in question was calculated to tear away the foundations of the church of England, and through her means to destroy the very being of the English constitution, and after a most formidable opposition it was rejected. Lord Stanhope shortly after introduced a bill to prevent suits in the ecclesiastical courts for the recovery of tithes, which was also rejected.

At an advanced period of the session, Mr. Wilberforce brought forward his motion relating to the abolition of the African slave trade; he divided his subject into three parts—the nature of the trade as it affected Africa itself; the appearance it assumed in the transportation of the slaves; and the considerations suggested by their actual state in the West Indies. What must be the natural consequence of a slave trade with Africa, said he, with a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Was it not plain that she must suffer from it? that her savage manners must be rendered still more ferocious, and that a slave trade carried on round her coasts must extend violence and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the privy-council. With respect to the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies, he affirmed that so much misery, condensed into so small a compass, was more than human imagination had ever before conceived. It was the constant practice to set sail in the night, that the slaves, wrung

with distress at quitting for ever their native country, might not be sensible of the moment of departure. This dreadful event was marked with songs and tears of lamentation. It appeared in evidence, that a captain, more susceptible than the rest, had threatened a woman with the terrors of the lash, because her song was too painful for his feelings. The mortality on board the ships was prodigious; and, including the subsequent seasoning, it did not amount to less than 50 per cent. On their arrival in the West Indies, astringents and washes were employed to hide their wounds, and make them up for sale—artifices at once fraudulent and fatal. This infamous traffic was also known to be the grave of sailors employed in it. Of 3170 seamen who sailed from Liverpool in 1787, only 1428 had returned. Mr. Wilberforce said he felt the wickedness of the slave trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, and irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short of its abolition. He acknowledged that his mind had indeed been harassed with the objections of the West India planters, who had asserted that the ruin of their property must be the consequence of this regulation. He could not, however, help distrusting their arguments. He could not believe that the Almighty Being who forbade the practice of rapine and blood, had made rapine and bloodshed necessary to any part of his creation. Light soon broke in upon his mind. His suspicions were confirmed by daily information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was decisive and complete. The principle upon which he founded the necessity of the act was not indeed policy but justice; but though justice were the principle of the measure, he would pledge himself to prove it reconcileable with our truest political interest. From an induction of authentic



facts, he showed that the number of slaves had rapidly increased by natural means on those plantations—and many such he enumerated—where they had been treated on a plan of lenity and humanity; and that the enormous annual importation from Africa was rendered necessary merely by the prevalence of that system of cruelty and oppression which the abolition of the slave trade must eventually subvert. But it was urged, that the interests of the masters would induce them, in the usual course of things, to treat their slaves with kindness and humanity. He appealed to universal experience for the fallacy of this argument. It was certainly the true and ultimate interest of the planters to adopt the system of lenity; but they consulted their apparent and immediate interest in imposing rigorous tasks, and in circumscribing within the narrowest limits their miserable allotments of food, of clothing, and of repose. To assert that men will of course act as their interest under the guidance of reason would dictate, is, in effect, to pronounce all men upright and virtuous; for virtue is the path to genuine happiness. But are not mankind, he asked, enveloped in the mists of ignorance, of folly, and of passion? Was it not the grand and perpetual object of religion, of morality, and of all just and beneficent legislation, to enlighten the human mind, and to assist men in discerning their true interest; to warn them of the danger of departing from it, of being deceived by false and flattering suggestions,—in a word, to incite them, though too oft in vain, to the practice of what is right, and to deter them from the commission of that which is wrong, by motives the most powerful, by sanctions the most sacred? Mr. Wilberforce concluded a long and eloquent speech by moving twelve propositions, specifying the number of slaves im-

ported from Africa into the British West Indies; the different descriptions of persons included in this aggregate number; the injury sustained by the seamen employed in the African trade; the causes of the mortality of the negroes; and the different items of calculation respecting the increase of population in Jamaica and Barbadoes; declaring, that no considerable or permanent inconvenience would result from discontinuing the farther importation. The members for London, and several great trading towns, degraded themselves by becoming advocates for the continuance of this detestable traffic; but perceiving that the sense of the nation was decidedly in favour of the abolition, and alarmed at the support the ministry gave to the measure, as well as the reception it met with in the House, Lord Penryn, one of its opposers, asserted that, to his knowledge, the planters were now willing to assent to any regulation of the trade, short of its abolition. In reply to this remark, Mr. Fox, with great animation declared, that he knew of no such thing as a regulation of robbery, and restriction of murder: there was no medium: the legislature must either abolish the trade, or plead guilty to all the iniquity with which it was attended. Mr. Pitt at length conceded, with the consent of Mr. Wilberforce, to the examination of witnesses on the part of the slave merchants and planters, trusting that unnecessary delays would not be introduced, as he could by no means submit to the ultimate procrastination of so important a business. Evidence having been heard at the bar of the House for several successive weeks, and the session being far advanced, the friends of the abolition consented, on the 23d of June, to an adjournment of the question to the succeeding session of Parliament, and the temporary regulation



act of Sir William Dolben was renewed for another year.

On the 1st of July, Mr. Dundas, in conformity to the India regulation bill, made his annual statement of the finances of the company, which he represented as in a prosperous and flourishing condition ; concluding, however, with a motion to empower the company to raise the sum of 1,000,000*l.* by way of increase of capital, to be subscribed by the present proprietors of East India stock. The bill, founded on this motion, passed both Houses without difficulty.

In the annual statement of the finances, it appeared that the income of the country, for each of the last two years, amounted, on an average, to 15,578,000*l.* From several circumstances, however, particularly from the discharge of the Prince of Wales's debts, from a large sum voted to the loyalists, and the expense of the armament in the preceding year, a loan of 1,000,000*l.* became necessary. The interest of this loan Mr. Pitt proposed to discharge by a ton-tine, which he averaged at four and a half per cent. This sum, he observed, added to some deficiencies, would call for taxes to the amount of 100,000*l.* per annum. To answer this, new duties were laid upon newspapers, advertisements, cards, dice, probates of wills, and upon horses and carriages. Mr. Sheridan strongly controverted the statement of Mr. Pitt, and moved, on the 10th of July, for a committee to inquire into the state of the revenue, in which he pledged himself to prove, that the report of the committee of 1786 was not founded in fact ; and that, for the three last years, the expenditure had exceeded the income to the amount of 2,000,000*l.* Mr. Sheridan's proposal was resisted by the ministerial side of the House, and rejected.



Early in the session the trial of Mr. Hastings was revived, but the intervention of the circuits of the judges rendered it impossible for the Lords to proceed upon the trial before the 20th of April, when the court was resumed, and sat during the remainder of the session seventeen days. The third article, respecting presents illegally and corruptly received by Mr. Hastings, was brought forward by Mr. Burke. In the course of his harangue, the honourable manager, having occasion to mention the charge which had been instituted on this head against Mr. Hastings by Nundcomar, with his usual unguardedness of language, added, that Mr. Hastings had murdered that man by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey. As the transaction respecting Nundcomar made no part of the charges, Mr. Hastings thought proper to present a petition to the House of Commons, in which he entreated them either to cause this and similar allegations, made by Mr. Burke, to be prosecuted in distinct articles, or to afford him such redress as the House might judge suitable and proper. The petition was strongly resisted by Mr. Burke and his friends; but it received the cordial support of Mr. Pitt, as far as regarded the business of Nundcomar. After a long debate the House of Commons resolved, "that no authority has been given by the House, for the purpose of making any criminal charge respecting Nundcomar, and that the words complained of ought not to have been spoken." A resolution of censure was afterwards moved upon Mr. Burke by the Marquis of Graham, and voted by a majority of 135 against 66.

An important operation of finance took place in the course of the session, in the exchange of the heavy duties on tobacco from the customs to the excise,

which was effected without much opposition. It is worthy of observation, as characteristic of the inconstancy of public opinion, that this measure, which had nearly cost Sir Robert Walpole his place, and even endangered his life, and against which 200 members of the House of Commons divided on the original motion of the minister, was now opposed, on the third reading of the bill, by 20 voices only, in a thin House of 90 members.

Mr. Grenville, speaker of the House of Commons, having been advanced, upon the resignation of Lord Sydney, to the office of secretary of state, and subsequently to the peerage, was succeeded by Henry Addington, Esq. who soon acquired great reputation for dignity, integrity, and impartiality, in the discharge of his office. The Parliament was prorogued on the 11th of August, by a speech from the lord-chancellor, in the name of the Sovereign, in which it was observed, that, although the good offices of the King and his allies had not been effectual for the restoration of general tranquillity, the situation of affairs promised to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of the blessings of peace. The recent events which had taken place in the different nations of Europe, rendered an assurance like this, at such an eventful period, peculiarly grateful. A war had been kindled which gradually spread from the Euxine to the Baltic; from the snow-clad mountains of Norway to the arid wastes of Tartary: and the foundation of a great and stupendous revolution had been laid, which, by a sudden and almost miraculous expansion, became at once an object of admiration and terror to a gazing and astonished world.



## CHAPTER XVI.

THE French Revolution, an event in comparison with which all the revolutions of states and empires recorded in the annals of History are insignificant, was at this period in full activity; and although the details of the circumstances which led to this great occurrence must be sought in the History of France, it has in such an especial manner influenced the state of these kingdoms, that some notice of it is absolutely necessary. Human affairs are generally gradual in their progress from infancy to perfect maturity, but the revolution in France resembled the shock of an earthquake or the eruption of a volcano; nothing could resist its impetuosity.

The disputes which had subsisted between the King and the parliaments, during the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, appeared to terminate on the accession of his grandson, into whose hands the reins of government fell at the early age of twenty, and whose first acts were highly popular; but although he had all the virtues of private life, he had none of the talents necessary in situations of difficulty. From various causes, among which the impolitic interference of the French government in the dispute between Great Britain and her American colonies may be more particularly mentioned, the finances of France fell into a state of the most serious embarrassment, and such was their deplorable condition in 1788, that only part of the demands on the treasury was paid in cash, the remainder being liquidated by means of bills due at the end of the year. The appearance of a partial bankruptcy was only avoided by a royal



edict, enjoining all bankers, and others, to receive the paper of the *caisse d'escompte* as money. In addition to this, a scarcity was threatened, and many of the people were actually perishing for want of bread: the notion therefore became prevalent, that the States General alone could rescue the nation from impending ruin, and on the entreaty of M. Necker, the celebrated banker of Geneva, who more than any other man possessed the confidence of the French nation, and who had been recalled to the office of minister of finance, which he had held previously to M. de Calonne, who now resigned, his Majesty consented to their convocation. On the 27th of December an order of council was procured, declaring that the deputies to the States General should amount to at least 1000; that the number sent by each bailiwick should be in a ratio compounded of its population and taxes; and lastly, that the members of the third should be equal to the joint amount of the other two estates, the nobles and the clergy. At length, the States General, the disuse of which ever since the year 1614 sufficiently proved the aversion with which they were regarded by the princes and ministers who had succeeded, assembled at Versailles on the 5th of May, 1789. After a long ceremonial, the King, with the Queen and the princes and princesses of the blood around him, delivered a discourse to the assembly, in which he expressed his hope, that the convocation of the States General would communicate new vigour to the nation, re-establish public credit, and open additional sources of happiness. M. Necker directed the attention of the assembly principally to the state of the finances, which he allowed to be deranged, but stated the actual deficit not to exceed 56,000,000 of French livres. The first business of

the assembly was the verification of the powers of the members, on which subject differences immediately arose, the third estate insisting that it should be done in a common assembly of the three orders, whereas the nobles and clergy adhered to the ancient practice of each verifying in its own house. This dispute was rendered important from the plan annexed to it by the democratic party, of voting by *pole*, and not by *orders*, which would clearly give the third estate the preponderance, since their number was equal to the other two conjoined, and they might expect adherents from both. The nobles were resolute, and formed their separate house; the clergy wavered; and after an inaction of six weeks, the third estate, being joined by a few of the clergy, and feeling themselves strong in the public opinion, declared themselves the legislative body, and assumed the title of the *National Assembly*. Their first act was to declare all the imposts illegal, because they had not been consented to by the nation. They, however, re-enacted them instantly in the name of their constituents, declaring, that they ceased on the very day on which the present assembly should be dissolved. All future proceedings were prevented in consequence of a step on the part of the King, who, on the 20th of June, declared, by a herald at arms, that the debates of the assembly were suspended, and that it was his Majesty's intention to hold a royal session on the 22d. The members of the assembly, thus finding themselves excluded from the national hall by a guard of soldiers, now assembled in the tennis-court at Versailles, and, as though actuated by one general impulse, all the deputies arose and took an oath never to separate until the constitution should be formed, and the regenera-

tion of France accomplished. The three orders were assembled by the King's command, in royal session, on the 23d of June, when, after lamenting the disputes which had taken place, his Majesty insisted on maintaining the distinction of orders, and annulled the celebrated decree, by which the Commons had declared themselves the national assembly. He, at the same time, alluded to the benefits which he was preparing to confer on his people; but nothing positive was said relative to the liberty of the press, or the participation of the States General in the enactment of laws; on the other hand, he hinted at the retention of the most unpopular of all the prerogatives claimed by the crown—that of *lettres de cachet*, subject, however, to certain restrictions; and the continuance of the tyrannical privileges arising out of the feudal system. The sittings of the Assembly having been continued, an union of the orders took place, and on the 27th, forty-seven of the nobles, headed by the Duke of Orleans, repaired to the hall of the states, and at the express recommendation of the King, whose intentions were as good as his conduct was imbecile, the minority of the clergy and the majority of the nobles followed their example.

Notwithstanding these appearances of cordiality, orders had been for some time issued by the court to collect a large body of troops; and as the French troops could not now be depended on, foreigners were employed; a formidable train of artillery was provided; the commanding eminences were crowned with batteries; and the Marshal de Broglie was nominated to the chief command. The capital, ever jealous of the court, and alarmed at these formidable preparations, was now greatly agitated; the people



assembled in prodigious multitudes in the gardens of the Palais Royal, and a large body of the soldiery began to make common cause with the inhabitants.

On the 11th of July Necker was suddenly deprived of his office, and sent into exile ; and a new administration was formed, all the members of which were considered as the decided advocates of the ancient regime. The intelligence of this event excited a furious commotion in the capital, and an attempt to disperse the populace by means of a foreign regiment having been defeated, the citizens armed, and were joined by the French guards. An extraordinary circumstance occurred at this moment, which tended not a little to produce and accelerate the catastrophe which ensued. Twenty thousand men of different nations, who had been employed in cutting roads over Montmartre, but who were now without bread, and without occupation, threatened to plunder the capital, which was itself rapidly approaching to a state of famine. These banditti had already approached to the suburbs, and after burning the outlet called the White Barriers, began to enter several houses.—To meet this emergency, it was resolved to form a city militia, and the citizens ran in crowds to inscribe their names as the defenders of their country. Arms being still wanting, upwards of 30,000 men ran to the hospital of the invalids, seized on the artillery, and obtained possession of about 50,000 muskets, sabres, and pikes, which had been concealed there. The citizens were immediately marshalled, and more than 60,000 enrolled and distributed into companies; patrols were established in every district ; the sergeants and grenadiers of the French guards were appointed officers ; cannon were immediately posted on the Pont Neuf, the Pont Royal, and in all the

avenues leading to Versailles ; while the Place Dauphine was provided with a numerous artillery, and became the head-quarters of the insurgent army.

On the 14th of July, the idea was suddenly conceived of attacking the Bastile, or state-prison, and M. de Launay, the governor, was summoned to surrender. After an assault of two hours, in which many lives were lost on both sides, the Bastile, though deemed impregnable, was carried by storm. The lives lost by the assailants were revenged by the massacre of the governor, M. de Launay, and several others, whose heads were carried about the streets upon poles ; and that sanguinary spirit was fully imbibed which characterized the whole revolutionary period. On the capture of the Bastile it remained to release those victims of tyranny, with which this horrible den of despotism was always said to be crowded ; but what was the surprise and disappointment of the insurgents, when, on forcing their way into the towers, in which the prisoners were confined, they found only seven persons, four of whom were committed on a charge of forgery ; one was confined, at the request of his family, for offences not known, but stated to be of the most serious nature ; and two were mad !

Astonished and intimidated at these proceedings, the King, with that disregard of personal danger which he displayed through the most trying scenes, appeared in person the next day in the National Assembly, and declared that he had issued orders for the immediate removal of the troops. A burst of joy and acclamation succeeded ; M. Necker was almost immediately recalled and reinstated in his office ; the Count d'Artois, Marshal Broglio, the Prince of Conde, and others of the noblesse were compelled to seek for

safety in flight, and on the 17th of July the King made his triumphal entry into Paris.

The Assembly now proceeded without interruption in their labours, and passed several decrees pronouncing the annihilation of all feudal privileges; the abolition of all distinction of orders; the resumption of tithes and other ecclesiastical and monastic property; the dissolution of monastic institutions; the allotment of the kingdom into a new territorial division, under the name of departments, eighty-three in number, nearly equal in population and extent; the extinction of the provincial parliaments, and the establishment of departmental assemblies, of courts of justice, and the trial by jury, in each department. The projected frame of government was a limited hereditary monarchy, in which the legislative authority was rendered superior to the executive, the latter being only allowed a suspensive veto. The person of the King was declared inviolable, and the throne indivisible. The decrees having been sent to the King with a requisition for their promulgation, a letter was received from him, objecting to certain articles; but on its being represented that those observations would come properly under consideration when it should be proposed to reduce them into the form of laws, the King, on the 20th of September, sanctioned the decrees.

The derangement of the finances seemed now the only obstacle to the restoration of tranquillity, but such were the necessities of the state that their regulation was a work of no ordinary difficulty. In the mean time suspicions were entertained among the people, relative to the sincerity of the higher orders in the sacrifices they had concurred in, and it was also rumoured and believed that preparations were in



train to facilitate the retreat of the King to Metz, in Lorraine, where the royal standard was to be raised in hostile opposition to the National Assembly. Under the influence of these suspicions, and the distress arising from a scarcity of bread, a fresh insurrection broke out at Paris, and a mob of both sexes, escorted by some armed men, proceeded to Versailles, and attacked the palace on the night of the 6th of October. Amidst massacre and plunder the royal family were brought into great danger of their lives, but were rescued by the National Guard; and the King and Queen, conducted by the Marquis de la Fayette, who had been made commander of that corps, were brought to Paris and placed in the Thuilleries under guard. This triumph of the popular party occasioned a new change in the constitution by the National Assembly, to whose will no opposition appeared, the King unconditionally acceding to almost every thing which they chose to establish. The country was, however, still far from tranquil. The seizure of the church property, though a measure which passed with little opposition at Paris, excited serious commotions in several of the provinces, where a zealous attachment to the ancient religion yet continued.

A decree which passed the Assembly in June 1790 excited, more perhaps than any thing that had yet been done, the hostility of the superior classes throughout Europe: it was for the abolition of all hereditary titles, orders, armorial bearings, and other marks of the distinction of ranks in society. When it is considered how fondly, even in the most enlightened countries, men are attached to honours which elevate them above the mass of their fellow-citizens, the indignation excited by such an example of levelling may readily be conceived. That all men have equal

rights is an undeniable fact. Every individual possesses the right of private judgment, of vindicating his innocence when unjustly accused, and to such a portion of the productions of the earth as his own industry can acquire, but equality of rank or property is most grossly absurd, and as utterly impossible as equality of talents. Place all mankind on a level this moment, and they will not continue so for any length of time, because superior talents must very soon acquire the ascendancy. The importance of great abilities, either for deliberation or execution, must quickly be perceived, and their possessors rewarded according to their value. Men *may* be placed upon a level, but you can no more make them continue in that state than you can separate heat from fire, or weight from lead.

On the minds of the people of England, the impression made by the passing events in France was various. The general opinion, however, was highly favourable to the Revolution; and even its most criminal excesses, seen through a distorting medium, were viewed by the multitude with a favourable aspect. Nor was this at all strange. Attachment to the British constitution naturally generates an abhorrence of despotism, under every possible form and shape. And to this principle may, probably, be attributed the praise which many men, of superior intellects, bestowed on, what they considered, the efforts of the French nation to shake off the shackles of tyranny, and to establish a new government, on the basis of civil liberty. But such men must have contemplated the Revolution in the abstract, and have looked to remote consequences, which their ardent imagination represented to them as certain, without descending to any minuteness of inquiry into the mo-

tives in which it originated, the means by which it was accomplished, or the effects which it had actually produced. But while the love of freedom led many, certainly without due consideration, to admire the French Revolution, the admiration of others flowed from a very different source; from a revolutionary ardour, and a fondness for innovation, which led them to look on all resistance to power as commendable, to confound revolt with liberty, and to convert conspirators into patriots. Amidst this general predilection for the new politics of France, there were some few who viewed them with horror; who considered the principles broached by the leading members of the National Assembly, and adopted by the majority, as striking at the very root of society; and who foresaw that those proceedings, instead of producing such a change in the condition of the French people, as every friend to rational and well regulated freedom must desire, would bring forth the most calamitous consequences, and terminate either in popular anarchy, or in the establishment of unqualified despotism. Amongst its most ardent admirers, was an assemblage of persons, who had associated themselves for the purpose of commemorating the British Revolution of 1688, of which Lord Stanhope was president. On the occasion of the Anniversary meeting in November, 1789, one of its most distinguished members, Dr. Price, a dissenting minister, equally eminent for his talents and his zeal, strongly declared his admiration of the new principles which had been promulgated at Paris and Versailles; and the committee resolved to congratulate the members of the Society on the glorious success of the French Revolution, and to express their ardent wishes "that the influence of so glorious an example may be felt by all mankind, until tyranny and despotism shall be



swept from the face of the globe." The Doctor moved a congratulatory address to the National Assembly of France, in which the Society offered to that assembly their congratulations on the revolution in that country, and on the prospect it gave to the two first kingdoms in the world of a common participation in the blessings of civil and religious liberty. They expressed the particular satisfaction with which they reflected on the tendency of the glorious example given in France to encourage other nations to assert the unalienable rights of mankind, and thereby to introduce a general reformation in the governments of Europe, and to make the world free and happy. The resolution of this club was accordingly transmitted to the National Assembly, whose president duly acknowledged the honour conferred upon them.

At the time that public opinion took this direction, Mr. Pitt and his colleagues remained perfectly quiescent, and contented themselves with a renewal of their assurances of continued amity with France, without expressing either approbation or disapprobation of the measures of internal policy, which the government, or rather the National Assembly, had thought proper to adopt.

Such was the state of affairs when the British Parliament, elected in 1784, assembled for its last session on the 21st of January, 1790. The King's speech contained nothing remarkable. It slightly glanced at the affairs of France, in declaring that the internal situation of the different parts of Europe had been productive of events which had engaged his Majesty's most serious attention. Early indications, however, appeared of the light in which the recent transactions in that kingdom were viewed by the English government. Lord Valletort, in moving the address, took

occasion to contrast the tranquil and prosperous situation of England with the anarchy and licentiousness of France, and to denounce the revolution in that kingdom as an event the most disastrous, and productive of consequences the most fatal, which had ever taken place since the foundation of that monarchy.

Soon afterwards, upon the debate which took place on the army estimates, Mr. Burke observed, that, on a review of Europe, he did not find that we stood in the smallest danger from any one state or kingdom it contained; nor that any foreign powers, but our own allies, were likely to obtain a preponderance in the scale. France, said he, has hitherto been our first object in all considerations concerning the balance of power: but France is, in a political light, to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe. Whether she could ever appear in it again, as a leading power, was not easy to determine: but at present he considered France as not politically existing: and most assuredly, it would take much time to restore her to her former active existence. It was said, as she had speedily fallen, she might speedily rise again. He doubted this. The fall from a height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and opposed by the laws of physical and political gravitation. In a political view, France was low indeed; she had lost every thing, even to her name. He was astonished at it. He was alarmed at it. He trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatness. The French had shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto appeared in the world. In one short summer they had completely pulled down to the ground their monarchy, their church, their nobility, their law, their army, and their revenue. Were we absolute conquerors, and



France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should blush to impose upon them terms so destructive to all their consequence as a nation, as the durance they had imposed upon themselves. In the last age we were in danger of being entangled, by the example of France, in the net of a relentless despotism—a despotism, indeed, proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, splendour, magnificence, and even covered over with the imposing robes of science and literature. Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from licentious violence—a danger of being led from admiration to imitation of the excesses of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy—of a people whose government is anarchy, and whose religion is atheism. What the French nation valued themselves upon was, in his opinion, a disgrace to them. They had gloried, and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory, in making a revolution. All the horrors and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to this revolution, which attend its progress, and which may eventually result from its establishment, pass for nothing. The French have made their way through the destruction of their country to a bad constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their state, to which they were called by their monarch and sent by their country, they had rashly destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the state, and to give it a steady direction. These they had melted down into one incongruous ill-connected mass; and, with the most atrocious perfidy and violation of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property, and conse-



quently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set in confiscating all the possessions of the church. They had made and recorded a sort of institute and digest of anarchy, called 'A Declaration of the Rights of Man:' thus systematically destroying every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this mad declaration they had subverted the state, and brought on such calamities as no country, without a long war, had ever been known to suffer. He felt some concern that this strange thing, called a Revolution in France, should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the Revolution in England. In truth, the circumstances of our Revolution, as it was called, and that of France, were just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. What we did was, in truth and substance, not a revolution made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. The nation kept the same ranks, the same subordinations, the same franchises, the same order in the law, the revenue, and the magistracy; the same lords, the same commons, the same corporations, the same electors. The church was not impaired: her estates, her majesty, her splendour, her orders and gradations, continued the same: she was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of that intolerance which was her weakness and disgrace. Was little done then, because a revolution was not made in the constitution? No—every thing was done; because we commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Instead

of lying in a sort of epileptic trance, exposed to the pity or derision of the world, for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, the state flourished; Great Britain rose above the standard of her former self. All the energies of the country were awakened, and a new æra of prosperity commenced, which still continued not only unimpaired, but receiving growth and improvement under the wasting hand of time. Mr. Fox warmly expressed his total dissent from opinions so hostile to the general principles of liberty; and which he was grieved to hear from the lips of a man whom he loved and revered—by whose precepts he had been taught, by whose example he had been animated to engage in their defence. He vindicated the conduct of the French army, in refusing to act against their fellow-citizens, from the aspersions of Mr. Burke, who had charged them with abetting an abominable sedition by mutiny and desertion, declaring that, if he could view a standing military force with less constitutional jealousy than before, it was owing to the noble spirit manifested by the French army, who, on becoming soldiers, had proved that they did not forfeit their character as citizens, and would not act as the mere instruments of a despot. The scenes of bloodshed and cruelty that had been acted in France, no man could hear of without lamenting. But when the grievous tyranny that the people had so long groaned under was considered, the excesses they had committed in their efforts to shake off the yoke could not excite our astonishment so much as our regret. And as to the contrast which Mr. Burke had exhibited, respecting the mode in which the two revolutions in England and France were conducted, it must be remembered, that the situation of the two kingdoms was totally different.

In France, a free constitution was to be created: in England it wanted only to be secured. If the fabric of government in England suffered less alteration, it was because it required less alteration. If a general destruction of the ancient constitution had taken place in France, it was because the whole system was radically hostile to liberty, and that every part of it breathed the direful spirit of despotism. Mr. Sheridan pronounced the French Revolution to be as just as our own, proceeding upon as sound a principle, and a greater provocation;—and he vehemently defended the general views and conduct of the National Assembly. He charged Mr. Burke with an unwarrantable liberty of speech respecting that assembly; and with having libelled those illustrious characters, M. Bailly and M. de la Fayette. Mr. Pitt, without entering into the merits of the revolution, warmly applauded Mr. Burke, for the zealous and seasonable attachment which he had displayed to the principles of the British constitution.

Since the decision of the last session relative to the repeal of the test laws, the dissenters had not ceased their efforts to increase the number of their friends in the House of Commons; and, in contemplation of the approaching general election, they had even recommended a preference in favour of those who had shown themselves the friends and advocates of what they termed equal and universal liberty. Instead of Mr. Beaufoy, Mr. Fox was now solicited to move the House a third time for the repeal of the acts in question; to which he readily assented. The nation at large were now led to believe this to be a matter of high and serious import; and counter meetings of the friends of the church were called, in which the repeal of the test was deprecated as fatal to its security. On



the 2d of March Mr. Fox brought forward his motion of repeal, which he supported with wonderful ability. The decision of the House, however, was less favourable than on the former occasion; the motion being negatived, by 294 against 105.

Mr. Flood, the Irish orator, who had sat some years almost undistinguished in the British Parliament, now brought forward a plan of parliamentary reform, in conformity to which an additional number of representatives, to the amount of 100, was to be admitted into the legislative body, in a proportional ratio to the population of each county, by the election of the resident householders only. This motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, member for Norwich, the professed admirer of Mr. Burke; and by Mr. Pitt, who declared, that, were the motion before them the precise proposition he himself had formerly offered, he should now vote against it from a conviction of its actual impropriety. But at a more seasonable opportunity he would most certainly again submit his ideas upon the subject to the consideration of the House. The motion was at length withdrawn.

Mr. Dundas brought forward, on the 31st of March, his annual statement of the debts and revenues of the East India Company, and described their situation to be in the highest degree prosperous and flourishing. Through the wise and equitable administration of Lord Cornwallis, the revenues of Bengal had been advanced, during the last year, without the aid of any new imposition, from 1,800,000*l.* to 2,150,000*l.* His lordship, on his accession to the high office of governor-general had stated the situation of the provinces as most wretched and deplorable. In his dispatch to the court of directors, dated August the 2d, 1789, he says, "Independent of all other considera-

tions, it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interests of the company, that the principal landholders and traders, in the interior parts of the country, should be restored to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with decency, according to the customs of the several casts and religions. I am sorry to be obliged to say, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at present, excepting the class of Shroffs and Banians, who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of these provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must include almost every zemindar in the company's territories." And in his council minute of the 18th of September, 1789, his lordship writes, "I can safely assert, that one-third of the company's territory is now a jungle inhabited by wild beasts!" One of the first and most important measures of the new governor-general was to lease the lands in perpetuity, at an equal valuation, to the actual occupants; and, in alluding to this part of his conduct, his lordship thus forcibly expresses himself to the directors. "The security of property, and the certainty which each individual will *now* feel of being allowed to enjoy the fruits of his labours, must operate uniformly as incitements to labour and industry." This description cannot be construed into an encomium on the character of his predecessor, but appears very strongly to justify his accusers in the heavy charges advanced against his government.

The session of Parliament was already drawing to its close, when, on the 11th of May, Mr. Burke offered a motion to the consideration of the House, relative to the trial of Mr. Hastings, which had now continued for three years; a circumstance unprece-



dented in any criminal prosecution. This delay was partly owing to the nature of the subject, the distance at which the transactions had taken place, the difficulty in such a case of establishing facts by regular evidence, and the articles of impeachment, comprehending the public administration of India for a series of years. But these considerations were still insufficient to justify the extraordinary length of time already occupied in the trial, and the resentment originally awakened against the accused had gradually subsided into compassion for the man, whom the public now looked upon as the object of an endless persecution. It was scarcely possible to form any just opinion of a cause, the real merits of which were obscured in the immensity of the detail, and therefore, whether the guilt or innocence of the accused should be ultimately established, the prosecution was almost certain to fail in effecting the great and exemplary ends of substantial justice. During the last session the court sat only thirteen days on the trial, and as the managers had no authority to regulate the sittings of the Lords, they possessed but little power to facilitate the progress of the business; to put the trial, however, in such a train as to insure its conclusion in a reasonable time, Mr. Burke now moved, "that the House do authorize the managers to insist only upon such and so many of the charges as may appear to them conducive to the obtaining speedy and effectual justice, which was agreed to.

The abolition of the slave trade advanced very slowly; every mode of procrastination was resorted to on the part of the slave merchants and planters, and the whole session passed over in the hearing of evidence and examination of witnesses. This mode of conducting the inquiry afforded to the supporters



of the traffic abundant leisure to recruit their strength, an advantage of which they so successfully availed themselves, that upon the revival of Sir William Dolben's bill for limiting the number of slaves to be transported in each slave ship, they ventured to propose, as an amendment, to increase the number of slaves in proportion to the tonnage of ships, without regarding the extent of their superficies. This proposition, which destroyed the humane regulations of the bill, was carried, in the first instance, by a majority of five; such, however, was the alarm excited by this unexpected decision, that the amendment was rejected upon the report on the following day by a full House.

In the month of April Mr. Pitt presented his statement of the national revenue and expenditure; from which it appeared, that the receipt of the exchequer had surpassed that of the year preceding in the sum of 500,000*l*. About a fortnight afterwards, however, (May the 5th,) a royal message was delivered by the minister, announcing circumstances which indicated the approach of war. It appears that the celebrated Captain Cook, in his last voyage of discovery, touching at several ports on the western coast of North America, purchased from the natives a number of valuable furs, bearing a high price in the Chinese market. To encourage this branch of commerce, a spot of ground was, in 1788, procured from the Indians, and a regular establishment, defended by a slight fortification, formed at a place called Nootka Sound, situated about the 50th degree of north latitude. This was regarded by the Spaniards as an encroachment on their exclusive rights of sovereignty; and, consequently, the *Princessa*, a Spanish frigate, dispatched for this purpose by the Viceroy of Mexico,

in the following spring, seized upon the fort, and captured the English vessels, *Iphigenia* and *Argonaut*, trading on the coast. The Spanish commandant, hoisting the national standard, declared that the whole line of coast from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of north latitude belonged to the King of Spain. After much delay, and loss and vexation to the proprietors, the captured vessels were, however, restored by the viceroy, on the assumption that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in question to attempt an establishment on that coast. Of these particulars the court of London had been regularly informed, by the Spanish ambassador, so long ago as the 10th of February; and his excellency at the same time requested, that measures might be taken for preventing his Britannic Majesty's subjects from frequenting those coasts, and from carrying on their fisheries in the seas contiguous to the Spanish continent, as derogatory to the incontestable rights of the crown of Spain. The claims of Spain, in relation to her right of dominion and sovereignty in America, were in the highest degree chimerical: Charles the Third, however, had died in December, 1788, and his son Charles the Fourth, the succeeding sovereign of Spain, confiding in the justice of his claims, offered to submit the decision to any one of the kings of Europe, leaving the choice wholly to his Britannic Majesty. The reply of the court of London to the memorial of the Spanish ambassador is said to have been unnecessarily haughty; and an atonement was demanded for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain.

On the statement of the case in the royal message, the House of Commons unanimously voted an address to the King, assuring his Majesty of their determina-

tion to afford the most zealous and affectionate support in such measures as might become requisite for maintaining the dignity of the crown, and the essential interests of his dominions. A vote of credit also passed the House for the sum of 1,000,000*l.*; and vigorous military and naval preparations were made in both kingdoms, in the contemplation of an immediate declaration of war.

The session closed on the 10th of June; and, on the 11th, the Parliament was dissolved by proclamation.

Unable to contend alone with England, Spain had, in an early stage of the negotiation, applied to France for aid; but finding her unwilling to interfere, she complied with the British demand of previous restitution and indemnification; and, on the 2d of October, a convention was signed at the Escorial, by which every point in dispute was conceded by Spain. The settlement at Nootka was restored; the free navigation and right of fishery in the Southern Pacific were confirmed to Britain; a full liberty of trade and even of settlement was granted to all the north-west coasts of America, beyond the most northerly of the Spanish settlements, unaccompanied, however, by any formal renunciation of their right of sovereignty; and the two powers were, on the other hand, equally restrained from attempting any settlement nearer to Cape Horn than the most southerly of the settlements actually formed by Spain. An article was also inserted in this treaty: "That in all future cases of complaint, or supposed infraction of the present convention, no act of violence shall be committed, but an exact report shall be made of the affair to the respective courts, who will terminate such difference amicably."

But though Great Britain was thus happily rescued



from the horrors of war in this quarter of the globe, our Indian possessions were, at the same time, involved in a state of hostility. Of all the native princes of India, Tippoo Sultan, the son and successor of Hyder Ally, was the most formidable to the British government, and the most active to disturb its authority, and counteract its interests. The peace of Mangalore in 1784 had, it was supposed, secured his fidelity by very feeble ties; and the splendid embassy which soon after that event he dispatched to France, afforded just reason to suspect that some plan was concerted between the French government and the tyrant of Mysore, for the annoyance of the British settlements in India. The increasing power of Tippoo was not less formidable to the Dutch than to the English; and the vicinity of Cochin, their most flourishing settlement on the continent of India, to the territories of that restless despot, filled them with alarming apprehensions for its safety. But the Dutch, fully sensible of the perilous situation of Cochin, had got possession of two other forts, situated between that place and Mysore, to protect their favourite settlement. One of these forts, called Cranganore, was taken from the Portuguese by the Dutch, who retained quiet possession of it till some time in the year 1779, when it was conquered by Hyder Ally and garrisoned. When the war, however, broke out in 1780, between Hyder and the English, he was obliged to evacuate his garrisons on the Malabar coast, to employ his force in the Carnatic; and Holland and France soon after uniting with him against England, the Dutch availed themselves of Hyder's troubles to seize clandestinely the fort. Hyder was highly offended at the liberty taken by his good ally, and complained loudly of the transaction; but by the mediation of the French, a com-

promise took place. The forts of Cranganore and Acottah were, however, still objects of Tippoo's ambition; and notwithstanding his father had ceded the former by agreement to the Dutch, he marched a formidable force in June, 1789, towards Cranganore, with an avowed design of dispossessing them, and asserting a claim of right, founded on the transactions just related. Unable to retain the forts, and apprehensive for the fate of Cochin itself, the Dutch entered into a negotiation with the Rajah of Travancore for the purchase of them. Tippoo, on being informed of this circumstance, offered a larger sum than the Rajah; but as the latter was the ally of Great Britain, who was consequently bound by treaty to assist him, that politic people plainly perceived that, by placing them in his hands, they erected a most powerful barrier against the encroachments of a turbulent and ambitious neighbour. The imprudence of the Rajah in entering upon such a purchase, while the title was disputed, drew down upon him the heaviest censures from the government of Madras; and he was repeatedly cautioned against proceeding in the negotiation. The Rajah, however, not only concluded the purchase with the Dutch, but even treated with the Rajah of Cochin, without the privity of Tippoo, to whom the latter was an acknowledged tributary. It was not to be expected that Tippoo would remain an idle spectator of these transactions. He insisted on the claim which he retained over these forts, on the ground of their being conquered by his father, and in consequence of the subsequent compromise, he asserted, with some plausibility, that in virtue of the feudal laws, no transfer of them could be made without his consent as Sovereign of Mysore. Accordingly, on the 29th of December, 1789, Tippoo made a direct



attack upon the lines of Travancore; but receiving a remonstrance from the British government of Fort St. George, he desisted from farther hostilities, and even apologized for his recent conduct, by affirming, that the attack was occasioned by the Rajah's people having first fired on his troops; that notwithstanding this, he immediately ordered his troops to discontinue the attack, and sent back the people whom they had captured. From the 29th of December to the 1st of March, 1790, Tippoo Sultan remained perfectly quiet, still, however, asserting his claims to the feudal sovereignty of the forts, but at the same time offering to submit the object in dispute to the decision of any impartial arbitration. The Rajah, who appears all along confident of being supported by the British arms, ventured on the 1st of March to make an offensive attack on Tippoo's lines. For this extraordinary step, the Rajah alleged, in excuse, the hostile preparations of Tippoo in the erection of batteries, &c. An engagement took place; and war being thus commenced, the British government conceived themselves bound to take an active part in favour of the Rajah their ally. Though the justice of the war may be fairly questioned, yet as the favourite object of the English had long been the humbling of Tippoo, it must be confessed there was at least much policy in selecting the present period for the accomplishment of such a purpose. With all the other native powers of India we were not only at peace, but treaties of alliance existed between Great Britain and the two most powerful states in that quarter, the Nizam and the Mahrattas, both of whom declared themselves in perfect readiness to exert their utmost force to crush the rising power of Mysore. Unfortunately for Tippoo, while he was thus exposed to the vengeance of a powerful confederacy, the dis-



tracted state of France cut off all hopes of assistance from his once great and formidable ally.

This summer was rendered remarkable from the heat of political controversy, occasioned by the principles of the French revolution. The anniversary of that event, dated from the fall of the Bastile, July the 14th, having been celebrated with great triumph in several parts of the kingdom, by the zealous friends of those popular rights which it asserted, Mr. Burke soon after published his celebrated work, entitled "Reflections on the French Revolution," in which he had employed all the undiminished powers of his wit, eloquence, and reasoning, to expose to the public resentment and indignation those persons who had in this country manifested their approbation of the revolution in France; and to place that revolution itself in an odious light, as an event to be deplored, detested, and deprecated. In an appendix, he invited and exhorted all Christian princes to make "a common cause with a just prince, dethroned by rebels and traitors." The deluded people of France, to be rescued from the evils which they had brought upon themselves, must, as he affirmed, be subdued; and he recommended, that this war, or crusade, should be conducted on principles different from any former one. The members of the Revolution Society, and the other commemorators of the French revolution, he strongly inveighed against; and he charged Dr. Price in particular with having fulminated; in his revolution sermon, principles little short of treason and rebellion. This extraordinary production gave rise to numberless replies, of which the most memorable was "The Rights of Man," written by Thomas Paine. Not content with pointing out what he regarded as the misrepresentations of Mr. Burke, and

the abuses and corruptions of the existing government, he daringly attacked the principles of the constitution itself, indecently describing it as radically vicious and tyrannical; and reprobating the introduction of aristocracy or monarchy, under whatever modifications, into any form of government, as a flagrant usurpation and invasion of "the unalienable rights of man." This tract unfortunately appeared at a time when a large proportion of the community were in a state of great irritation and discontent; and as it was written in a popular style and manner, innumerable converts were made to its system, and infinite pains were taken to circulate it amongst the body of the people. Political institutions were also formed in every part of the kingdom, professing to have in view the reform of the constitution, but which, with too much reason, were suspected really to aim at its subversion.

On opening the new Parliament, which assembled on the 25th of November, 1790, the King expressed his satisfaction that the differences with Spain were brought to an amicable termination; and observed, that, since the last session of Parliament, a foundation had been laid for a pacification between Austria and the Porte—that a separate peace had actually taken place between Russia and Sweden, but that the war between Russia and the Porte still continued. He observed, with concern, the war in India, occasioned by an unprovoked attack on an ally of the British nation; but which, from the state of our forces in India, and the confidence which the native powers had in the British name, there was a favourable prospect of bringing to a speedy and successful conclusion. On the 3d of December the chancellor of the exchequer presented to the House, a copy of the convention with Spain, the terms of which were ratified



in both Houses by great majorities, but not unanimously ; for the documents relative to the negociation being partly withheld, Mr. Grey moved for the production of such papers as contained the requisitions made by ministers to the court of Spain ; declaring, that it was utterly impossible to decide upon the policy of the late measures without sufficient documents, as the House could not at present determine, whether we might not have gained all the boasted advantages of the convention at a much less expense than had been incurred ; or, whether the late disputes were owing to the restless ambition and unjust claims of Spain, or to the rashness, presumption, and ignorance of his Majesty's ministers. Mr. Fox affirmed, that, by this convention, our rights were greatly curtailed : the treaty, he said, was a treaty of concessions instead of acquisitions ; and we had given up what was of infinite value to Spain, and retained what could never be of much to ourselves. In the House of Lords, the convention was reprobated by the Marquis of Lansdowne, who, in a speech replete with diplomatic information, took an extensive review of the politics of Europe from the peace of 1782. The basis of our politics at that period was, he said, a permanent pacific system for Europe. This principle we had pursued with respect to France, in extinguishing all false ideas of rivalry, in leaving nothing undefined, nothing to commissaries, nothing to foreign interference. With respect to Spain, the view was to give the most of what was conceded to the weakest power ; and this was done with the more propriety, as American possessions were no longer the same object with England as formerly. As to Holland, the design was to stipulate in favour of the general freedom and extension of trade, and to counteract the



spirit of commercial monopoly which had long distinguished that power. In pursuance of this system of politics, the commercial treaty with France had been concluded, as well as the convention with Spain respecting the Spanish American Main in 1786. At this period the King of Prussia died, and then commenced an entire new system of English politics. France was again held out as our natural enemy. Every court was to tremble at the name of Britain. Holland was obliged by force, and not upon principle, to return to our alliance. The Turks and Swedes were put in motion to murder the Russians. Denmark was forbidden to interfere, and more work was found for the Emperor in the Belgic provinces. To crown the whole, the British triumph was at last to terminate in Nootka Sound. A few adventurers and men of letters had fitted out ships with fine names; and under Portuguese colours and papers, prepared to break through a system regarding Spanish America, which had been sanctioned by the policy of Europe for more than 200 years. In conclusion, we arm in a manner the most insulting, and summon Spain in terms equally unprecedented. Such was the present system, but we had not even pursued that with consistency and ability. We had neither secured France, nor Spain, nor any other power. By the convention, the fishery was defined to our disadvantage, being limited to ten leagues from the shore. As to the right of trading, that was asserted even in the time of Elizabeth, by the treaty of 1670, and afterwards acknowledged in 1749. But this proceeding at Nootka endangered the whole advantages of our commercial treaty with Spain. We were doing the work of other nations, and North America in particular. He should vote, his lordship said, for the previous ques-

tion, to shew the Spaniards the true temper of the nation, that we were not restless or insolent, as our enemies represent us; to preserve our reputation in Europe; and to deter future ministers from a similar proceeding.

On the 15th of December Mr. Pitt stated the whole amount of the expenses incurred by the armament to be 2,821,000*l*. From this, however, he said, that 200,000*l*. might be deducted for naval stores on hand; but this he should avoid, wishing to have every expenditure occasioned in any degree by the armament, stated separately, and separately provided for: upon this principle, he should include the expense of the addition of 6000 seamen at 312,000*l*., making the sum to be provided for, 3,133,000*l*. This addition of debt Mr. Pitt hoped the House, considering the great resources of the country, would meet with energy. He accordingly proposed various temporary taxes, which would discharge the incumbrance in four years—with the assistance of 500,000*l*. which he had it in contemplation to take from the unclaimed dividends lying in the Bank of England, the amount of which he estimated at 660,000*l*. This proposition, which excited alarm in all the great chartered companies, and in the commercial and mercantile world in general, was strongly opposed by Messrs. Fox, Thornton, and Whitbread; and the minister at length consented, by way of compromise, to accept of a loan of 500,000*l*. from the Bank, without interest, so long as a floating balance to that amount should remain in the hands of the cashier.

Mr. Burke, on the 17th of December, moved “that the House do resolve itself into a committee, to take into consideration the state of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq.” He then made a second



motion, " that an impeachment by this House, in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, against Warren Hastings, for high crimes and misdemeanors, is still pending." From this proposition, almost all the lawyers in the House declared their total dissent; and Mr. Erskine, in a very elaborate speech, endeavoured to show that, in consequence of the dissolution of Parliament, the impeachment had abated. Upon this great question, in the decision of which the honour, the dignity, and the authority of the House were so deeply involved, the Speaker delivered his opinion; and, upon an extensive review of facts and precedents, he gave it as his decided judgment, that the impeachment was still legally pending. In this opinion Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and the most eminent parliamentary authorities on both sides, concurred. After a short interval Mr. Burke, adverting to the perpetual obstructions thrown in the way of this trial by the body of the law, made a third motion, that the managers be instructed to proceed to no other parts of the impeachment, excepting such as relate to contracts, pensions, and allowances, which was carried with slight opposition.

The resolution of the Commons, which decided that an impeachment did not abate by a dissolution of Parliament, was strongly contested in the House of Lords. On a message from the Commons, that they were ready to proceed in their evidence, their lordships appointed a committee to search into precedents, which occasioned a suspension of the business till nearly the conclusion of the session. At length the report being made, Lord Porchester moved; on the 16th of May, 1791, that their lordships now proceed in the trial, which, after considerable opposition, was carried by a decisive majority; and their lord-



ships acquainted the House of Commons, by message, that they were ready to proceed. On the 30th of May, the managers having closed their case, Mr. Hastings requested that a day might be allowed him for stating what he thought of importance respecting the farther progress of his trial, and on the 2d of June, the Lords being seated in Westminster-hall, he rose and delivered from writing a speech of considerable length, in which, after expressing a willingness and desire to wave his formal defence to the charges exhibited against him, and to refer himself to their lordships' immediate judgment, he went into a statement of the substance of these charges, to which he gave brief and clear answers. His summing up was in the following terms: "To the Commons of England, in whose name I am arraigned for desolating the provinces of their dominion in India, I dare to reply, that they are, and their representatives annually persist in telling them so, the most flourishing of all the states of India—it was I who made them so. The valour of others acquired, I enlarged, and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there; I preserved it; I sent forth its armies with an effectual, but economical, hand, through unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other possessions: to the retrieval of one from degradation and dishonour; and of the other from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation or that of others, not of mine. I won one member of the great Indian confederacy by an act of seasonable restitution: with another I maintained a secret intercourse, and converted him into a friend: a third I drew off by diversion and negotiation, and employed him as the instrument of peace. When you cried out for

peace, and your cries were heard by those who were the object of it, I resisted this and every other species of counteraction by rising in my demands; and accomplished a peace, a lasting, and I hope an everlasting one, with one great state; and I at least afforded the efficient means by which a peace, if not so durable, more seasonable at least, was accomplished with another. I gave you all, and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment."—"There is no object upon earth so near my heart as that of an immediate determination of this tedious prosecution. I am so confident of my own innocence, and have such a perfect reliance upon the honour of your lordships, that I am not afraid to submit to judgment upon the evidence which has been adduced on the part of the prosecution." The Lords afterwards passed a resolution to proceed farther in the trial of Mr. Hastings on the first Tuesday in the next session of Parliament.

The boundaries of religious toleration were this year extended. It is a truth not very flattering to national liberality, that, notwithstanding the boasted freedom of our constitution, no country in Europe has been more jealous of its church establishment. Religious animosity has been in all ages of the Christian church a source of calamity to the human kind; and he who endeavours to point out the absurdity of sacrificing the cardinal virtue of charity, at the shrine of vain and presumptuous speculation, deserves the thanks of society. A reform in the penal statutes was at this time peculiarly called for, since, in the year 1790, a large body of Catholic dissenters had formally protested against the temporal power of the Pope, against his assumed authority of releasing men from their civil obligations, or dispensing with the sacredness of oaths.



It was upon this principle that Mr. Mitford, the solicitor-general, afterwards Lord Redesdale, moved on the 21st of February for a committee of the whole House, to enable him to bring in "a bill to relieve, upon conditions and under restrictions, persons called Protestant Catholic dissenters, from certain penalties, to which Papists are by law subject. Mr. Fox contended for the bill being made general. Let the statute book, said he, be revised, and strike out all those laws which attach penalties to mere opinions. He reprobated those statutes which condemn every man who worships God in his own way, as guilty of treason against the state. The bill passed through both Houses, in its original shape, without a dissenting voice.

Disputes disgraceful in themselves, and injurious to the administration of justice, having frequently arisen between the court and the jury, between the judges and the counsel on trials for libel, Mr. Fox, ever active in the defence of popular rights, moved for a bill to ascertain the authority of juries in such cases. With respect to the pretended distinction between law and fact, he observed, that when a man was accused of murder, a crime consisting of law and fact, the jury every day found a verdict of guilty : and this was also the case in felony and every other criminal indictment. Libels were the only exception, the single anomaly. He contended that, if the jury had no jurisdiction over libels, the counsel who addressed them on either side, as to the criminality of the publication, were guilty of a gross and insolent sarcasm. It was admitted on all hands, said Mr. Fox, that a writing might be an overt act of treason. In this case, if the court of King's Bench were to say to the jury, ' consider only whether the criminal published



the paper—do not consider the nature of it—do not consider whether it correspond to the definition of treason or not’—would Englishmen endure that death should be inflicted, without a jury having had an opportunity of delivering their sentiments whether the individual was, or was not, guilty of the crime with which he was charged? Mr. Pitt agreed with the principles stated by Mr. Fox, but recommended the bringing in a bill “to remove all doubts respecting the rights and functions of juries in criminal cases.” The bill was accordingly introduced, and passed the Commons; but on its transmission to the Lords, it was opposed, on the second reading, by the lord-chancellor, on pretence of its being too late in the session to discuss a measure of such importance, and the bill was consequently postponed.

Mr. Wilberforce, on the 18th of April, brought forward his long expected motion for the abolition of the slave trade, which he introduced with a copious and masterly display of the arguments in favour of that measure. His specific motion was, “for a bill to prevent the further importation of African negroes into the British colonies;” but being supported chiefly by arguments of humanity, and opposed by those of interest, it was negatived by a majority of 75 voices.

A discussion now incidentally arose, the result of which, in a political point of view, was of high importance. At the time that Canada was ceded to this country by France, and became a British colony, the King had promised its inhabitants the benefits of the British constitution. The French settlers in that country, and the native Canadians, had been joined by a considerable number of British subjects, and by royal emigrants from America; and these were most anxious to secure the advantages which the royal

promise had held out to their expectations. The ministers had, for some time, directed their attention to the subject, and it was recommended to the immediate notice of Parliament, by a message from the King in the present session. Accordingly, on the 4th of March, Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill for regulating the government of Canada, and he entered into a long and minute detail of every provision which he meant to propose. It was meant to divide the country into two provinces, Upper and Lower Canada, and to establish two distinct governments. The legislature of each province was to consist of a council and house of assembly; the members of the assembly were to be chosen by freeholders possessing landed property to the amount of 40s. a year, or occupiers of houses worth 20*l.* a year, and the members of the council were to hold their seats for life; with a reservation of a power to the crown, for annexing to certain honours an hereditary right of sitting in the council. The habeas corpus act was to be rendered a permanent law of the colony. A provision was to be made for the Protestant clergy, by an allotment of lands. Appeals were to be allowed to the privy-council, in the first instance, and from thence to the House of Lords. Great Britain renounced the right of taxation; no taxes were to be imposed but such as were necessary for the regulation of trade and commerce; and these only by the legislature of the country. The bill passed through its first stages without opposition, and almost without debate. It was read a first and second time; it passed the committee, and the report was received by the House; and no disapprobation was shown; but on the second consideration of the report, on the 8th of April, Mr. Fox commenced a warm opposition to the bill. The great



object of all popular assemblies, he observed, was, that the people should be fully and fairly represented; but when the assembly of one province was to consist of only sixteen, and the other of thirty persons, they deluded the people by a mockery of representation. They seemed to give them a free constitution, when, in fact, they withheld it; and he hoped it would never be said, that the constitution of Canada was modelled after that of England. That these representatives should be elected for the term of seven years, he reprobated as equally inconsistent with freedom. Even in England, where the frequent return of elections was attended with so much real inconvenience, the propriety of the septennial bill was justly a subject of doubt; but in a country so differently circumstanced as Canada, there could be no plausible objection to annual, or at most triennial, elections. Another strong ground of objection with Mr. Fox was, that the legislative councils were unlimited, as to numbers, by any other restriction than the pleasure of the King, to whom a power was also reserved of annexing to certain honorary and titular distinctions an hereditary right of sitting in council. As to hereditary honours, or hereditary powers, to say they were good or not, as a general proposition, was difficult; but he saw nothing so good in them as to warrant their introduction into a country where they were not known. He did not think it wise to destroy them where they existed; but to create them where they did not exist, he considered as exceedingly unwise. He could not account for it, unless it was that Canada having been formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving those titles of honour, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplored, and to revive in the West that spirit of chivalry which



had fallen into so much disgrace in a neighbouring country.

On the re-commitment of the bill, on the 6th of May, Mr. Burke enlarged upon the importance of the act which they were now about to perform. The first consideration, he said, was the competency of the House to such an act. A body of rights, commonly called the Rights of Man, had been lately imported from a neighbouring kingdom. The principle of this new code was, that all men were, by nature, free and equal in respect of their rights. If this code, therefore, were admitted, the power of the House could extend no farther than to call together the inhabitants of Canada to choose a constitution for themselves. The practical effects of this system might be seen in St. Domingo and the other French islands. They were flourishing and happy till they heard of the Rights of Man. As soon as this system arrived among them, Pandora's box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open, hell itself to yawn, and every demon of mischief to overspread the face of the country. Mr. Fox defended his former sentiments respecting the French revolution; and repeated that he thought it, upon the whole, one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind. In this assertion, however, he spoke of the revolution, not of the constitution, which still remained to be improved by experience, and accommodated to circumstances. The Rights of Man, which his right honourable friend had ridiculed as visionary, were the basis of the British constitution. Our statute book recognised the original inherent rights of the people as men, which no prescription could supersede, no accident could remove or obliterate. These had once been the principles of his right honourable friend, from whom he had learn-

ed them. His right honourable friend had said, with equal energy and emphasis, that he knew not how to draw a bill of indictment against a whole people. Having been taught by him that no revolt of a nation was caused without provocation, he could not help rejoicing at the success of a revolution resting upon the same basis with our own—the immutable and unalienable Rights of Man. Mr. Burke rose again, and insisted that the discussion of the Quebec bill was a proper opportunity to put the country on its guard against those dangerous doctrines which prevailed in France, and which had found so many advocates here. He had differed on many occasions from Mr. Fox, but there had been no loss of friendship between them. But there was something in the accursed French constitution that envenomed every thing. On hearing this, Mr. Fox immediately exclaimed, there was no loss of friendship. Mr. Burke said, there was—he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty, and their friendship was at an end. Mr. Fox's feelings were now too powerful for utterance. Involuntary tears were observed to steal down his cheek, whilst a profound and expressive silence pervaded the House. At length, recovering himself, he said, that however events might have altered the mind of his right honourable friend, for such he must still call him, he could not so easily consent to relinquish and dissolve that intimate connexion which had for twenty-five years subsisted between them. He hoped that Mr. Burke would think on past times; and, whatever expressions of his had caused the offence, that he would at least believe that such was not his intention. The concessions of Mr. Fox are said to have produced no visible impression on Mr. Burke; and from this day a schism took place in the politics of opposition.



On the 28th of March Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the House of Commons from the King, importing, that the endeavours which he had used in conjunction with his allies to effect a pacification between Russia and the Porte not having proved successful, his Majesty judged it requisite, in order to add weight to his representations, to make some further augmentation of his naval force. When this message was taken into consideration, Mr. Pitt, fully aware of the ambitious views of the Empress Catherine, who had avowed her resolution to interfere in the internal concerns of Poland, and had made no secret of her intention to place the imperial crown on the head of her grandson, Constantine, in the metropolis of the Ottoman empire, enlarged much on the necessity of attending to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. The influence of the Turkish empire, he observed, was of great effect in the general scale. Its present situation was such as to afford just cause of apprehension to other powers: and to Prussia, in particular, it must be highly injurious to suffer the Turkish empire to be diminished in force and consequence. He therefore moved an address, assuring his Majesty that his faithful Commons would make good such expenses as might be found necessary. This address was opposed by the whole strength and talents of opposition, but it was carried by 228 against 135 voices. On the 12th of April following, Mr. Grey moved a series of resolutions, expressive of the impolicy and inexpediency of a war with Russia, on such grounds. The motion was negatived by 259 against 179; but, as a Russian war was evidently an unpopular measure, ministers at length relinquished the point in dispute. Oczakow and its district remained with Russia; and, in the course of the ensuing



summer, preliminaries of peace between the two empires were signed at Gralutz, and afterwards ratified at Yassi.

In May a bill was brought into Parliament for the establishment of a colony at Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa, by way of experiment whether the culture of sugar, and other tropical products, might not be carried on by free negroes; and notwithstanding a strong opposition by the West India planters, it passed both Houses by a great majority. The session terminated on the 10th of June, when the King expressed his perfect satisfaction at the zeal with which the two Houses had applied themselves to the consideration of the different objects which he had recommended to their attention.

The affairs of France, though unnoticed in the King's speech, at the opening of Parliament, were now in a very critical state. On the evening of the 2d of September, 1790, Necker, whose popularity had been long extinct, having received information from M. de la Fayette that his life was in danger, and that the mob, which had been very riotous during the day, designed to attack his house in the night, he fled, in alarm, to his country house, at St. Ouen; and, the next day, having sent a farewell letter to the assembly, he left Paris, on his way to Switzerland. In the course of the ensuing month, the King of France communicated to M. Bouillé the design he had formed, of quitting Paris, and retiring to one of the frontier towns, where he meant to collect around him such of his troops and subjects as still retained their fidelity; and in case other means should fail, to call in the assistance of his allies, for the restoration of order and tranquillity in the kingdom. The King declared that, with respect to this plan, he acted in perfect con-

cert with the Emperor, and his other allies, who insisted on his being at liberty before they took any steps in his favour. M. Bouillé declared himself totally adverse to the project, as fraught with danger, and probably with ruin. At the latter end of January, 1791, however, the King notified to M. Bouillé, that he hoped to accomplish his departure from Paris in the month of March or April. On the 22d of January the King communicated to the National Assembly a letter from the Emperor of Germany, containing strong protestations of amity towards France; but intimating that, to consolidate that friendship, the revocation of the decree of the 4th of August, 1790, for the suppression of feudal rights, would be necessary, several German princes, possessing fiefs in Lorraine and Alsace, being injured thereby; that all innovations in virtue of that decree be abolished, and matters put upon their ancient footing. The Assembly immediately voted a large augmentation of military force, regardless of the intimation, that the Emperor had acted only in an official capacity, in conformity to the decrees of the diet.

On the 18th of April, the King being on the point of setting out from Paris to the palace of St. Cloud, to pass the Easter festival, his carriage was stopped by an immense crowd, chiefly of the lowest rank, under the apprehension of an intended escape, and consequent counter-revolution. Notwithstanding the exertions of M. de la Fayette, who attended the King's person, and pledged himself for his security, he was finally compelled to return to the Thuilleries. On a complaint of this insult to the Assembly, the president made a respectful apology to the King, and a transient but fallacious calm succeeded. In a declaration signed by the Emperor Leopold at Mantua;



on the 20th of May, and immediately transmitted to Paris, information was conveyed to the King and Queen, that the plan concerted for effecting a counter-revolution was in great forwardness, and that 100,000 troops, to be furnished by the several courts of Vienna, Madrid, and Turin, with the aid of the circles of the empire and the Swiss cantons, would be ready to enter France at the latter end of July, to act in conjunction with the regiments remaining loyal, the armed volunteers, and all the mal-contents of the provinces. On the night of the 20th of June, the King, Queen, Dauphin, and Princess Elizabeth, sister to the King, also the Count and Countess de Provence, suddenly disappeared from the palace of the Thuilleries. Eluding the vigilance of the guard, Monsieur and Madame took the road to Mons; the rest of the royal family that of Montmedi. The King left behind him a paper, in which he formally revoked all his past declarations, as the effect of compulsory influence, prohibiting the ministers from signing any order, and enjoining the keeper of the seals to send them to him when required in his behalf. On the discovery of this event, the King's arms and effigies were taken down and broken by the populace of Paris; a proclamation of the National Assembly, however, soon restored order. The royal authority was formally suspended by a decree of the Assembly, and a provisional executive council appointed. The national guards were instantly in arms, and deputations from all the different public bodies appeared at the bar of the Assembly, with the strongest and firmest professions of patriotism and obedience. Almost immediately, however, it was announced that the King and Queen had been arrested in their progress, at a place called Varennes, near the frontier. They were quickly brought back to Paris, and again con-



signed to the palace of the Thuilleries. Their entrance into the metropolis, and their slow and mournful procession through the principal streets of the city, exposed to the scornful gaze and bitter taunts of the multitude, formed a spectacle deeply affecting. The Queen, whose morning and meridian way through life had been strewn with roses and myrtles, now appeared to feel the fatal reverse of her fortune with exquisite sensibility; and perhaps, with a dark and dreadful foreboding of the future.

Commissioners from the Assembly having waited upon the King, to receive his written declarations respecting the late event, his Majesty asserted, that he had no intention of leaving the kingdom, but meant merely to fix at Montmedi, till the vigour of government should be restored, and the constitution settled. It was said, that the King had long carried on a secret correspondence with M. Bouillé, Governor of Metz, and commandant of the forces on the German frontier, who had sent a detachment to escort the King to Montmedi—a position to be maintained only by force, and whence, in case of necessity, he could easily retreat to the Austrian territory of Luxemburg. The accidental arrest of the King entirely disconcerted these measures, and M. Bouillé made his escape into Germany, where he published a strong declaration against the Assembly. Some of the more violent members of the Assembly now proposed, that they should declare an abdication, and place the Dauphin on the throne. Milder and more moderate counsels, however, prevailed; and the King remained at the Thuilleries, vigilantly guarded, till the completion of the constitution. On the 3d of September the *Constitutional Act* was presented to the King, who signified his acceptance of it in writing, on the 13th; and

on the following day he appeared at the Assembly, introduced by a grand deputation of sixty members, to consecrate the assent he had given; concluding with an oath to be faithful to the nation and to the law, and to employ the powers vested in him for the maintenance of the constitution. On the 30th of the same month, the *Constituent National Assembly*, as it was termed, after an uninterrupted session of two years and four months, terminated its existence by a spontaneous dissolution, having, by a kind of self-denying ordinance, determined that none of its members should be eligible to the next legislative assembly.

The French revolution was this year again celebrated in England: particularly at Birmingham, where, on the 14th of July, a party of gentlemen, to the number of 90, had a public dinner at the Hotel. Previously to the meeting, a most inflammatory hand-bill was circulated by some person, whose zeal was evidently greater than his judgment; and as party spirit ran very high at Birmingham, as the dissenters were numerous, and generally attached to the principles of the French revolution, and as the majority of the inhabitants firmly adhered to the church and to the King, such a hand-bill naturally excited a great fermentation in the town. A considerable number of persons assembled round the house at which the meeting was to be held, and hissed the company as they entered. These symptoms of discontent induced them to depart at a very early hour, after which the mob became riotous, and demolished all the windows in front of the hotel, notwithstanding the personal interposition of the magistrates. On the next day, Friday, July the 15th, the mob assembled in still greater numbers, and, there being no adequate force at hand to oppose them, became ungovernable. They de

stroyed Dr. Priestley's meeting house and residence, another meeting house, and several elegant and valuable houses in the town and neighbourhood, belonging to dissenters. These disgraceful riots continued from the evening of Thursday to that of Sunday, when a party of light horse arrived at Birmingham, to the great joy of the inhabitants. The mob then dispersed, all mischief ceased, tranquillity was restored, and some of the ringleaders were secured. In an early part of the business, the magistrates had offered 100 guineas reward for the discovery of the author of the inflammatory hand-bill already mentioned, and a greater reward was afterwards offered by government for the same purpose, but without effect. The rioters who were apprehended were put on their trial at the ensuing assizes, and two of them were executed. At Dr. Priestley's house, his philosophical apparatus, his library, and his manuscripts, were destroyed. The loss, of course, was considerable, and, in some respects, irreparable. The losses sustained by Dr. Priestley, as well as by the other sufferers, from those licentious outrages, were made good by the hundred, in the way which the law directs, and in which all similar losses are compensated; but the jury having made considerable deductions from the Dr.'s estimate, his damages being laid at 4122*l.* 11*s.* 9*d.* and the sum awarded being 2502*l.* 18*s.* he vented his complaints in a letter which he addressed to the people of Birmingham.

Previously to this period, societies had been formed in different parts of the kingdom, upon the plan of the revolution society; and, although they had not yet proceeded to those extremities to which they soon after had recourse, their avowed principles, and promulgated sentiments, were sufficient to arouse the govern-



ment to vigilance, if not to fill them with alarm. A regular correspondence was carried on with the revolutionary societies in France, from which even delegates were sent to compliment the associated sons of French liberty in this country.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

THE English Parliament assembled on the 31st of January, 1792, when the King announced the marriage of his son the Duke of York with the Princess Frederica, daughter of the King of Prussia; and informed the two Houses that a treaty had been concluded, under his mediation and that of his allies, between the Emperor and the Ottoman Porte, and preliminaries agreed upon between the latter of those powers and Russia. The general state of affairs in Europe, he said, promised a continuance of peace; and he was induced to hope for an immediate reduction of the naval and military establishments. The debates on the address, and several succeeding discussions in both Houses, principally turned upon the line of policy pursued by the ministry, in their interference in the quarrel between Turkey and Russia, and in the hostility they had displayed towards the latter power.

On the 17th of February, Mr. Pitt exhibited an interesting picture of national prosperity. The amount of the permanent revenue, with the land and malt duties annexed, from January 1791 to January 1792, he estimated at 16,730,000*l.* being 300,000*l.* more than the aggregate of the preceding year. The permanent expenditure, including the interest of the debt, the annual million applied towards its extinc-

tion, the civil list, and the military and naval establishments, he calculated at 15,810,000*l.* leaving a clear surplus of more than 900,000*l.* In this state of things he thought himself authorized to propose the repeal of a part of the more burdensome taxes, to the amount of about 200,000*l.* per annum ; and at the same time to apply the sum of 400,000*l.* to the reduction of the national debt, in aid of the annual million appropriated by Parliament. This would still fall far short of his estimate of the national ability, and there was good ground to believe that we had not reached by many degrees the summit of our prosperity. When the debentures to the American loyalists should be discharged, which would happen in about four years, an addition of near 300,000*l.* would accrue to the revenue. In consequence of the general improvement of credit, the three per cents would soon rise so high as to enable the Parliament to effect a reduction of the four, and, as soon as by law redeemable, of the five per cents, which would add the sum of 700,000*l.* or little less, to the sinking fund. The indefinite additions which might be expected from the increasing produce of the existing taxes, the result of our rapidly increasing commerce, must mock all calculation. Our exports had risen one-third in value since the year 1783, *i. e.* from 14,741,000*l.* to 20,120,000*l.* and our internal trade had increased in at least an equal proportion. Thus should we be enabled to make a swiftly accelerated progress in the essential work of liquidating the national debt, and in a very short space of time to reach a point which, perhaps, not long since, was thought too distant for calculation. On the continuance of our present prosperity it was indeed impossible to count with certainty ; but unquestionably there never was a time,

when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect a durable peace than at the present moment. Such were the brilliant hopes which at this moment the people were taught to indulge, and with such dazzling but deceptive splendour rose the morn of a year which was destined to set in darkness.

On the 7th of March the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee, to take into consideration an establishment for the Duke and Duchess of York. By the treaty of marriage, the King of Prussia engaged to give his daughter a portion of 100,000 crowns, and the duke agreed to make her royal highness a present of 6000*l.* and to place at her sole disposal, for pin money, 4000*l. per annum.* Mr. Pitt now proposed that 18,000*l.* a year should be allowed them out of the consolidated fund; in addition to which, it was in contemplation that a farther sum of 7000*l.* a year should be allowed them out of the Irish revenue. Lastly, he should propose, that in the event of her royal highness surviving the duke, the jointure of 8,000*l.* a year to her royal highness should be also payable out of the consolidated fund. In the opposition to the motion, the Bishopric of Osnaburgh was alluded to, as producing his royal highness a considerable sum, and 12,000*l.* being already settled on him, several members considered the proposed grant too large : the resolutions were, however, carried.

The system of raising money by lottery was strongly opposed, in a committee of supply, on the 28th March, when the chancellor of the exchequer proposed that 812,500*l.* be obtained by that mode. Mr. M. A. Taylor expressed his surprise that, in a time of profound peace, the minister should have recourse to a method of levying money so extremely injurious to



the morals and happiness of the people, and conjured the legislature to adopt some other means. Several instances were adduced of the evils to which the system of state lotteries had led, amounting to robbery and suicide, and a petition from the grand jury of Middlesex was presented by Mr. Mainwaring, earnestly praying the House to take the subject into serious consideration. The impression which these representations produced was such, that a motion for a committee to inquire into the evils arising from this source was immediately carried.

On the 2nd of April, the House resolved itself into a committee on the African slave trade. From the decision on Mr. Wilberforce's motion last session, it appeared that the enthusiasm of Parliament for the abolition had greatly abated; while on the other hand that of the public in general had increased. The table of the house was now covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom, imploring in earnest language the abolition of that inhuman traffic. Mr. Wilberforce declared, that from his exertions in this cause he had found happiness, though not hitherto success. It enlivened his waking and soothed his evening hours, and he could not recollect without singular satisfaction, that he had demanded justice for millions who could not ask it for themselves. He was aware that several who opposed him, judging by the humanity with which their own slaves were treated, could not conceive how the conduct of others could be so cruel. But it was not a Trajan or an Antoninus that would make him in love with despotism, for though they would not misuse their power, there were a great many others that would. He disclaimed any design of an immediate emancipation of the negroes, and concluded an able and eloquent speech, by moving

the question of abolition. Mr. Wilberforce was powerfully supported by many of the most respectable members of the House; amongst whom Mr. Whitbread particularly distinguished himself. It was the necessary quality of despotism, he said, to corrupt and vitiate the heart: and the moral evils of this system were still more to be dreaded than the political. But no mildness in practice could make that to be right which was fundamentally wrong. Nothing could make him give his assent to the original sin of delivering man over to the despotism of man. It was too degrading to see, not the produce of human labour, but man himself, made the object of trade. Mr. Dundas, who had been advanced to the dignity of secretary of state, by the resignation of the Duke of Leeds, recommended the adoption of a middle and moderate plan, such as would reconcile the interests of the West India islands with the eventual abolition of the trade; and moved, that the word gradual might be inserted, before abolition. Mr. Pitt declared his decided disapprobation of the amendment, and conjured the House not to postpone even for an hour the great and necessary work of abolition. Reflect, said he, on the eighty thousand persons annually torn from their native land! on the connexions which are broken! on the friendships, attachments, and relationships that are burst asunder! There is something in the horror of it that surpasses all the bounds of imagination. How shall we repair the mischiefs we have brought upon that continent? If, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Britain! Shall we not rather count the days and hours that are suffered to intervene, than to delay the accomplishment of such

a work? If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this night the line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see the reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry—in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which at some happy period, in still later times, may blaze with full lustre; and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Mr. Fox supported the same side, with much force. The amendment, however, was carried, by a majority of 68; on which Mr. Dundas moved, that the importation of negroes into the British colonies should cease on the 1st of January, 1800. This, on the motion of Lord Morington (now Marquis Wellesley) was, after great difficulty and debate, altered to January 1, 1796. A series of resolutions founded on this basis were then agreed to, and sent up for the concurrence of the Lords; where the Duke of Clarence, the third son of the King, commenced his parliamentary career with a violent declamation against the abolition and its advocates. The lord-chancellor moved, that evidence be heard, not before a select committee, according to the proposition of Lord Grenville, but at the bar of the House. This motion having been carried, very little more was done in the business during the remainder of the session.

The next business of importance that came under the consideration of Parliament, was the establishment of a new police for the city and liberty of Westminster. The bill for this purpose was introduced by



Mr. Burton, the outline of whose plan was, to establish five principal offices, to each of which three justices of the peace were to be appointed, with a salary of 300*l.* each *per annum*. The fees paid into all the offices were to be consolidated into one fund, which was to be applied towards the discharge of the salaries, and no person in the commission was to be permitted to receive fees. To unite personal security with general liberty ; to preserve inviolate the rights of property ; to repress the efforts of violence without establishing a system of tyrannical coercion, is among the most arduous labours of government and legislation. That the established system required some alteration, no person acquainted with the subject could possibly doubt : but in the new regulations it appeared to many that an alarming influence was added to the executive power, and that one clause in particular, by which the constables were empowered to apprehend such persons as could not give a good account of themselves, and the magistrate to commit them as incorrigible rogues and vagabonds, conferred on magistrates a power pregnant with abuse ; the lower class of the people, on whom it would exclusively fall, having seldom the means of applying for legal redress. As the professed design of this clause was to facilitate the discovery of a new species of criminals, called reputed thieves, it was pointedly asked, what was the definition of a reputed thief ? To punish men for acts which they had not committed, but for crimes which they intended to commit, was a new and dangerous principle in English law. Besides this, the bill referred to another act, as the rule of punishment : the vagrant act was the statute alluded to, a statute sufficiently objectionable, both on account of its undefined extent, and the extreme

severity of the punishments it inflicts. The present bill, however, was not proposed as an absolute remedy for all the defects of the existing police, but as a measure calculated to discover the best mode of framing a system, which might approach as near perfection as human infirmity would admit. It was a mere experiment, being limited in its duration, and as, at the expiration of the term proposed, Parliament would be able to judge of its expediency, it passed into a law.

On the 18th of April, Mr. Sheridan made his long expected motion for an inquiry into the grievances complained of by petition from the royal Burghs of Scotland. The petitions set forth the general mismanagement, misapplication of money, dilapidation of property, and various injuries and grievances sustained by the petitioners, in consequence of the usurped authority of certain self-elected magistrates in these burghs, and that to these complaints there was at present no redress to be obtained under the law of Scotland. It had been observed, Mr. Sheridan said, that there were such grievances in England as well as in Scotland : but was this any reason for giving redress to neither ? Was justice to be defeated by a community of oppression ? Of late it had become a fashion to decry every thing in the shape of reform, it was, however, the best part of our constitution, that it contained a principle of reform in its very nature, and we had at this day nothing in it that was beautiful, that had not been forced from tyrants, and taken from the usurpations of despotism. Some persons, said he, seem to think that the French revolution should deter us from thinking of reform. Whatever might be the conduct of the parties concerned in that revolution, with regard to the event itself there could be but one feeling upon the subject : exultation and joy at the

downfal of the despotism of France, the greatest enemy England ever had. That despotism, whose ambitious, restless, and turbulent spirit, had cost England so many thousands of her subjects, and so many millions of her money; that despotism, which had long disturbed the happiness of the human race, was completely destroyed. We ought, he said, to attend to a rational and sober reformation of abuses, at a time when there was nothing to interrupt us: this was the only way of avoiding the evils with which a reformation by violence might be attended. The motion for a committee was ably supported by Mr. Fox, but was lost by 69 against 27.

Mr. Fox's renewed motion, for a repeal of the Test Laws; and Mr. Whitbread's motion for an inquiry into the subject of the Birmingham riots, were subsequently negatived, by large majorities. The libel bill, however, introduced in the last session by Mr. Fox, and lost in the Lords, was this session triumphantly carried through both Houses, and passed into a law, notwithstanding the opposition of the law Lords, Thurlow, Kenyon, and Bathurst. A bill introduced into the House of Peers by Lord Elgin, for the relief of the Scottish episcopals, who had long been subject to heavy penalties on the ground of disaffection to the revolution establishment, was also passed.

In addition to the political societies already noticed, it was thought proper, by many of the professed advocates of constitutional liberty, about this period, to institute a society under the name of the *Friends of the People*, for the alleged purpose of effecting a reform in Parliament, on the principles formerly enforced by Mr. Pitt. About thirty members of Parliament, besides other persons of note, entered their names as members of this association. When Mr.



Grey, one of the members, gave notice of his intention to move, in the course of the ensuing session, for an inquiry into the state of the representation, Mr. Pitt warmly declared his total disapprobation of introducing, at a period so critical and dangerous as the present, a discussion of such difficulty and importance. This he affirmed was not a time for experiments; and if he was called upon either to risk this, or for ever to abandon all hopes of reform, he would say he had no hesitation in preferring the latter alternative. He saw with concern the gentlemen to whom he alluded, virtually united with others who professed the reform of abuses, and meant the subversion of government. A royal proclamation was immediately afterwards issued against the public dispersion of all seditious writings, and against all illegal correspondences—exhorting the magistrates to vigilance, and the people to submission and obedience. The proclamation having been laid before the House of Commons on the 25th of May, and an address moved of approbation and support, it was opposed by Mr. Grey with much warmth, and the proclamation itself condemned in severe terms as a measure insidious and pernicious. The diligent inquiry, said the opposition, enjoined by the proclamation after the authors and distributors of wicked and seditious writings, could only tend to establish an odious and arbitrary system of espionage. This was the system which had made the old government of France so much the object of general detestation, and it was a system unworthy of the sovereign of a free people to recommend. The real object of the proclamation was merely to discredit the late association in the view of the public. This Mr. Pitt explicitly disclaimed, and expressed his high respect for many of the members of the association in question,

declaring that he differed from them only in regard to the time and mode which they had adopted for the attainment of their object. The association in question did not come within the scope and purview of the proclamation, which was levelled against the daring and seditious principles which had been so assiduously propagated amongst the people, under the plausible and delusive appellation of the Rights of Man. The address was finally carried, without a division, and, receiving the concurrence of the upper House, was presented in form to the throne. It was followed by addresses from all parts of the kingdom: and the ministry commenced prosecutions against a number of offenders, amongst whom Thomas Paine stood most conspicuous. Notwithstanding the professional ability of Mr. Erskine, as his advocate, he was found guilty of the charge; but foreseeing the probability of this event, he had effected his escape to France.

The trial of Mr. Hastings occupied twenty-two days of the present session. The attention of Parliament, towards the close of the session, was also drawn to the situation of India. Mr. Dundas stated the surplus of the Bengal revenue for the preceding year to be 1,100,000*l.* but it was remarked by Mr. Francis that the state of the country was ill able to bear the weight of these impositions. The seizures for non-payment of the land revenue were, he said, most alarmingly notorious: and he held in his hand, at that moment, two Bengal advertisements, the one announcing the sale of seventeen villages, the other of forty-two. The rest of the debate consisted chiefly in desultory conversation concerning the Indian war, the principal events of which we shall briefly describe.

The actual commencement of hostilities may be dated from the engagement between the troops of the

Rajah of Travancore, stationed at Cranganore for the defence of that fortress, with those of Tippoo Sultan on the 1st of May, 1790. This event was the signal of a most vigorous preparation for war on the part of the British. The grand carnatic army immediately assembling, under the command of General Meadows, marched through the southern or Coimbatore country, and, penetrating the Ghauts, or passes of the mountains, advanced towards the city of Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore. On the western side, the Bombay army, under General Abercrombie, after reducing Cannanore and several other places on the coast, entered the kingdom of Mysore. The Sultan defending himself with great resolution, and no mean display of military skill, General Meadows found himself under the necessity of retreating to the vicinity of Madras; where, in December 1790, Lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army in person. A grand effort was now resolved on to force a passage to Seringapatam, through the country westward of Madras. On the 21st of March, 1791, the important town of Bangalore was taken by storm, with little loss on the part of the British, but with a dreadful carnage of the unresisting garrison. On the 13th of May, the army, by extraordinary exertions, arrived in sight of the superb capital of Mysore, defended by the Sultan in person; and on the next day an action took place, in which Tippoo was defeated. The swelling of the Cavery, however, in an island formed by the branches of which Seringapatam is situated, with the want of provisions, compelled Lord Cornwallis to commence his retreat to Bangalore, almost before his victory could be announced. General Abercrombie, who had advanced through the Ghauts on the opposite side, with a view to form a



junction with Lord Cornwallis, was now also obliged to lead back his army, over the mountains they had lately passed. In the interim, the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept aloof, leaving the burden of the war almost entirely to the British. The ensuing campaign, for which Lord Cornwallis had made unremitted preparations, opened early in February, 1792. The eastern and western armies, resuming their former plan of operations, effected, before the end of the month, a junction under the walls of Seringapatam ; and the forces of the Peishwa and of the Nizam encamped also at a small distance, and furnished to the British army a plentiful supply of stores and provisions. On the 6th of February a general attack was made by moon-light, the troops marching in grand and awful silence to their respective posts, on the lines of the Sultan, which was attended with very important effects, Tippoo being compelled to relinquish his former advantageous position, which covered his capital ; and Seringapatam was, in consequence of this defeat, closely and completely invested. The situation of Tippoo being now almost hopeless, he thought proper to send a vakeel to the camp of Lord Cornwallis to sue for peace ; which the British general granted on the hard terms, 1. Of his ceding one half of his dominions to the allied powers. 2. Of paying three crores and thirty lacks of rupees, as an indemnification for the expenses of the war. 3. The release of all prisoners ; and, 4. The delivery of two of his sons as hostages for the due performance of the treaty.

On the 26th of February, the Princes, each mounted on an elephant magnificently caparisoned, proceeded to the British camp, where they were received by Lord Cornwallis with all possible demonstrations of

kindness and affection. The Princes, the eldest, about ten, and the younger about eight years of age, conducted themselves with a politeness and propriety which astonished the spectators. On the 19th of March the definitive treaty, signed by the Sultan, was delivered by the young Princes, with great solemnity, into the hands of Lord Cornwallis; but the sums specified in the second article not being actually paid, the Princes remained under the safeguard and custody of his lordship for some time longer. The ceded territories were divided into three equal portions, and shared between the company, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas.

On the 15th of June, Parliament was prorogued, his Majesty expressing his great concern at the actual commencement of hostilities in different parts of Europe, assuring them that his principal care would be to preserve to his people the uninterrupted blessings of peace. It is proper, also, to remark, that as soon as it was known that there was a war on the continent, a proclamation was published by the King, prohibiting all his subjects from taking any part in it, by accepting commissions from either party, fitting out privateers or letters of marque, by virtue of such commission, or serving on board any ship of war belonging to one of the belligerent powers, against the other.

The second National Assembly of France met October 1, 1791. The late assembly having decreed that no person should be eligible to two successive legislatures, the present was not only destitute of the experience, talents, and integrity of the former, but, having been chosen at a period when the national rage was at the highest pitch, was of a much more republican complexion. The opening speech of the King

was received with applause, and the president expressed the united wish of the assembly to comply with his views, but this fair prospect was soon overcast. By the King's desire, on the acceptance of the constitutional act, a decree of indemnity had passed respecting the emigrants, on the condition of their returning to their country within a limited time; the agent, however, deputed on this commission to the refugee princes at Coblentz, was not only treated with contempt, but actually imprisoned, on pretence of his want of passports. In consequence of this outrage, and of the hostile preparations of the emigrants, a decree passed the Assembly early in November, 1791, declaring Prince Louis Stanislaus Xavier to have forfeited, in case he do not return to the kingdom in two months, his eventual claim to the throne; and, by a subsequent decree, the Assembly pronounced the French hostilely assembled on the frontier guilty of a conspiracy against their country, in case they did not return before the 1st of January, 1792; incurring thereby the forfeiture of their estates during their lives, but without prejudice to their children. On the 18th of November a severe decree passed the Assembly against the nonjuring clergy, but to both these decrees the King opposed his veto. In the mean time, the emigrants armed at Coblentz, and a political crisis evidently approached: the Assembly addressed the King to take effectual measures to prevent the dangers which menaced the country; and the King, in reply, assured the Assembly that the Emperor had done all that could be expected from a faithful ally.

It subsequently appeared, that, on the 24th of August, 1791, the Emperor Leopold, the King of Prussia, and the Elector of Saxony, had met at the



castle of Pilnitz, in Lusatia, belonging to the Elector, where they remained to the 28th. On the 27th, the Emperor delivered the following declaration to the Count d'Artois, who assisted at the conferences, and who had, in the month of May preceding, been admitted to a personal interview with the Emperor at Mantua.—“ His Majesty the Emperor, and his Majesty the King of Prussia, having heard the desires and representations of Monsieur and of his Royal Highness the Count d'Artois, declare jointly, that they regard the situation in which his Majesty the King of France actually is as an object of common interest to all the Sovereigns of Europe. They hope that this concern cannot fail to be acknowledged by the powers whose assistance is claimed; and that in consequence they will not refuse to employ, jointly with their said Majesties, the most efficacious means, in proportion to their forces, to place the King of France in a state to settle, in the most perfect liberty, the foundations of a monarchical government, equally suitable to the rights of Sovereigns, and the welfare of the French. Then, and in that case, their said Majesties are decided to act quickly, and with one accord, with the forces necessary to obtain the common end proposed. In the mean time they will give suitable orders to their troops, that they may be ready to put themselves in motion.” This paper was signed by the Emperor and King, whose project was, to form a league between all the powers of Europe, to surround France on every side with their armies; and then to publish a manifesto, requiring the French government to restore the King and royal family to their liberty, to re-instate his Majesty in his dignity, and to re-establish the monarchy on a solid basis, and upon reasonable principles. Threats of an invasion

and an attack upon all points were to be held out, and to be executed in case of refusal. And it was agreed between the courts of Vienna and Berlin, according as circumstances should determine, either to make the claims of the German princes in Alsace a subject of negotiation, or a pretext for war. Addresses were presented to the Assembly from every quarter of the kingdom, indicating their dissatisfaction with the court. The republican party gained great strength; and forming themselves into a club, or society, assembling at the convent of the Jacobine Friars, recently dissolved, they acquired the then popular but since infamous appellation of Jacobins. The friends of monarchy, on the other hand, had, from a similarity of circumstances, obtained the name of Feuillants.

Warlike preparations continued to be made by the German powers; when, on the 1st of March, the Emperor Leopold II. died suddenly, of a malignant fever, and was succeeded by his son, Francis II. This event produced not the least change in the system of continental policy; and at length, the French ambassador, M. Noailles, was ordered to require from the Imperial court a distinct specification of its ultimate objects. The reply was contained in a short note from M. Cobentzel, stating the conditions of peace to be the re-establishment of the monarchy on the basis of the royal session of Louis XVI. held June 23, 1789. All hope of reconciliation being now at an end, war was, in conformity with a message from the King, on the 20th of April, formally declared against Austria. About this time, a letter was written by the King of France to the King of England, expressing his obligations to his Britannic Majesty for his impartial conduct, and making eager advances to the formation of a treaty of amity and

alliance. To this letter an answer was returned on the 8th of July, after an interval of twenty days, intimating that, in the existing circumstances of the war now begun, the intervention of his Britannic Majesty's councils, or of his good offices, could not be of use unless they should be desired by all the parties interested. War having been declared, the National Assembly published an address, which was immediately succeeded by offers of voluntary contributions from numerous classes of society, and demands from some of them to be sent to the posts of greatest danger. The Assembly also enacted, that the army should be increased to 450,000 men, and that 300,000,000 livres, in government paper, called assignats, should be placed at the disposal of ministers, to support and uphold that large establishment.

Rochambeau, who had acquired renown in the seven years' war, was appointed to command an army of from 30 to 35,000 men in the north, and took up his head-quarters at Valenciennes; the Marquis de la Fayette commanded the army of the centre, and established his head-quarters at Mentz, having at his disposal 20,000 men; and the army of the Rhine, consisting of 50,000, was placed under the command of Marshal Luckner, a foreigner, extending itself from Landau to the frontiers of Switzerland. On the 1st of May, General Dillon, marching from Lisle against Tournay, was opposed by a body of Austrians under Count d'Happencourt, when the French troops, unaccustomed to the fire of regular soldiers, fled precipitately, and were pursued to the gates of Lisle. No sooner had General Dillon entered that city, than he was murdered by his fugitive soldiers, and his dead body torn in pieces by the mob, under pretence of his having betrayed his troops to the enemy. On the



same day another expedition, consisting of 10,000 men, under Lieutenant-general Biron, directed their march towards Mons, but were obliged, after some partial success, to retreat with the utmost precipitation to Valenciennes. A third expedition under M. Carl was also obliged to retreat without effecting any thing of importance. La Fayette, who had the command of the main army, had orders to proceed to Givet, and with the other armies under Dillon, Biron, and Rochambeau, to form a general rendezvous in the heart of the Austrian Netherlands; but the failure of Dillon and Biron rendered this expedition also in a great measure abortive.

At this time, the French cabinet was distracted by angry contests, which terminated in the resignation of Rochambeau, commander-in-chief of the northern army, and of M. de Grave, war minister; the former of whom was succeeded by Luckner, and the latter by Servan. The King firmly refused to give the royal assent to a decree for embodying 20,000 men in the neighbourhood of Paris, and another, authorizing the banishment of any nonjuring priest on a petition presented to the directory of the district by twenty citizens. He also dismissed Roland, Servan, and Claviere; appointing a new administration of the Feuillant party. On the 20th of June, one Santerre, a brewer, at the head of a considerable mob, produced a petition to the King for the dismissal of the new administration, and the withdrawing of the veto, by means of which he had been persuaded to suspend the execution of several decrees. An immense multitude, armed with pikes, preceded by two pieces of cannon, and accompanied by a crowd of women, proceeded to the Assembly, and required permission to present their homage, and file through its hall. They then

proceeded to the palace, and soon forced their way into the presence of his Majesty, to whom they read their petition. Louis XVI. exhibited on this occasion considerable intrepidity ; neither the threats nor howlings of the mob could prevail upon him to alter his intentions, or withdraw his veto ; and the populace was, at length, persuaded to retire. This visit to the Thuilleries was but a prelude to one far more terrible ; for though the Girondists, who only wished for a popular administration, always exhibited a laudable aversion to the shedding of blood, yet it was otherwise with the Robespierrean party, their rivals, who now began to display a degree of ferocity hitherto unexampled in any age or country. On the 14th of July, the day of the federation, when Louis approached the altar to renew his oath, a thousand tongues denounced him as a perjured prince ; and it was with some difficulty that the Swiss guards, and the national grenadiers, could ensure his safety.

The propositions of the court of Vienna being deemed inadmissible, and war being declared by France against the King of Hungary on the 20th of April, a counter-declaration was issued on the 5th of July, on the part of Francis II. ; and on the 26th, Frederic William II. published a concise exposition of the reasons which determined Prussia to take up arms against France. It was at this crisis that the armies of the allied sovereigns, amounting to 80,000 of the best troops in Europe, accompanied by a formidable band of expatriated nobles, were about to enter France under the command of the Duke of Brunswick, who had served with distinguished reputation under Frederic the Great, and who had gained fresh laurels by the sudden conquest of Holland. On the arrival of the duke at Coblenz, with the first division of his

army, he was proclaimed Generalissimo, and on the 25th and 27th of July, he put forth two manifestoes, explanatory of the reasons which actuated the allied sovereigns in taking up arms against France. They were drawn up in a style of haughty and sanguinary menace, and espoused the cause of royal authority in a manner calculated to confirm the suspicions generally entertained in France, that Louis participated in the councils of the allied powers. In communicating these documents to the legislative assembly, the King in vain implied a doubt of their authenticity, and expressed the most faithful attachment to the constitution. One member affirmed that he had asserted what was not true, and on the 3d of August, M. Petion, at the head of the sections of Paris, appeared at the bar of the National Assembly, to demand the dethronement of the King. A petition of the same tenor was presented by a countless multitude on the 6th, and the Assembly had appointed the 10th of August to decide upon this grand question ; but early on the morning of that day, the palace of the Tuilleries was attacked by the Parisian populace ; and, being valiantly defended by the Swiss guards, whose first volley covered the Place de Carousel with dead bodies, a most bloody conflict took place, which terminated in the total defeat and destruction of the guards, and the complete triumph of the Parisians. The King at the commencement of the engagement had retreated across the gardens of the Tuilleries, with the Queen, to the hall of the Assembly, who continued sitting in the midst of this unexampled scene of terror and confusion, and the incessant noise of musketry and cannon. All freedom of deliberation was now at an end : and a decree passed, declaring the executive power suspended, and summoning a national convention to meet on the 20th



of September. The King and Queen meanwhile were committed close prisoners to the temple, and on the following day a new provisional executive council was appointed, consisting of Roland, Servan, and Claviere, dismissed by the King; to whom was added M. le Brun, as minister of foreign affairs. M. Luckner, M. Dumouriez, now acting in the capacity of general in the army, and the other commanders, submitted with readiness to the authority of the Assembly. La Fayette alone attempted resistance; but, finding himself wholly unsupported by his troops, he was obliged to make a precipitate escape. Being intercepted in his flight, and delivered up to the Prussians, he was committed close prisoner to the fortress of Magdeburg, and treated with uncommon severity. The combined armies in the mean time made considerable progress. The town of Longwy surrendered on the 21st of August, and in a few days afterwards that of Verdun. The country was now pronounced to be in danger; notwithstanding which, the National Assembly declared war against the King of Sardinia, who had given repeated proofs of his attachment towards the royal family.

Subsequently to the deposition of the King, the prisons had been filled with persons accused or suspected of disaffection to the existing government; and a sort of frenzy seizing the populace on the approach of the Duke of Brunswick, the prisons were forced open on the night of the 2nd of September, and a most inhuman and infamous massacre of the prisoners took place. On the 20th the National Convention met at Paris, and a decree was immediately passed by acclamation, for the eternal abolition of royalty in France.

It was now the fate of the allied armies to experi-

ence a severe reverse. Of the five passes of the forest of Argonne, those of Croix-aux-Bois and Chene Populeux to the eastward were, after many ineffectual attempts, forced by General Clairfait; on which General Dumouriez abandoned the important defile of Grand-Pre, to avoid being enclosed, and retreated without loss to the strong camp of St. Menchould. On the 16th of September the Prussians entered the Grand-Pre, and took post on the heights of La-Lune, between the enemy and Chalons. But the position of the French army being adjudged, after much deliberation, impregnable, and the attempt to proceed to Paris, leaving a force, now increased to 60,000 men, in the rear, appearing to the Prussian general in the highest degree rash and dangerous, no alternative remained. The French army receiving continual reinforcements, and the Prussians beginning to experience the evils of sickness and famine, in addition to the ordinary sufferings of war, the Duke of Brunswick was reduced to the necessity of commencing his retreat on the 1st of October, and by the 18th the Austrian and Prussian armies had completely evacuated France. At this time, indeed, the French arms were triumphant in every quarter. General Montesquieu, entering Savoy on the 20th of September, was received with acclamation at Chamberri, the capital, and the whole country submitted almost without resistance. On the other side, the fortress of Montalban and the entire county of Nice were conquered by General Anselm. On the banks of the Rhine, General Custine reduced successively the cities of Worms, Spire, Mentz, and Frankfort. On the 20th of October, a decree passed the National Convention, declaring that the republic was saved, and the country no longer in danger. Early in November, Dumouriez entered the Austrian



Netherlands, and gained the victory of Jemappe, the consequences of which were decisive as to the fate of the Netherlands. Mons instantly surrendered ; Tournay, Ostend, Ghent, and Antwerp, soon followed ; and on the 14th the French general made his triumphal entry into Brussels. Before the end of the year the whole of the Austrian low countries, Luxemburg only excepted, with the city and territory of Liege, were subjected by the victorious arms of France. Elated by this unexampled series of triumph, the following decree was passed by acclamation in the Assembly, on the 19th of November : “ The National Convention declare, in the name of the French nation, they will grant fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty. And they charge the executive power to send orders to the generals to give assistance to such people ; and to defend citizens who have suffered, and are now suffering, in the cause of liberty.” This decree was productive of very serious consequences. Two other decrees of the Assembly also require to be mentioned : the one passed November the 27th, erecting the duchy of Savoy into an 84th department of the French republic, contrary to a fundamental article of the constitution, by which she renounced all foreign conquest : the other, on the capture of Antwerp, declaratory of the freedom of navigation on the river Scheldt.

The execution of the decree for banishing all the nonjuring clergymen to Guiana, who should not have quitted the kingdom in fourteen days from its passing, poured thousands of these unfortunate exiles from Normandy, Picardy, and Brittany upon our coasts of Kent and Sussex. Wherever these sufferers appeared, they were welcomed, relieved and comforted, and our difference from that very religion for which



they were persecuted, was swallowed up in a generous feeling for their unfortunate and hapless condition.

At this period, France was not the only European state which attracted the notice of the political observer. In Poland, a country always bordering on a state of anarchy, and subject to the undue influence of the neighbouring powers, the efforts of a patriotic King, and of a nobility and clergy, prepared to make every sacrifice for the promotion of the public welfare, were rendered abortive by the unwarrantable interference of Prussia and Russia. The latter power, in particular, assumed a tone of command, and a conduct correspondent therewith, utterly incompatible with the independence of the state to which it was addressed. The alterations which the Poles made in the internal government of their country affected only themselves, and there existed no pretext for interference, except what arose out of views too unjust to acknowledge, and out of designs too dishonourable to reveal. The principal change in the constitution of Poland was the substitution of an hereditary for an elective monarchy ; a change highly favourable to the national independence, constitutional stability, and social order. The destined successor of Stanislaus was the Elector of Saxony, to whom no national objection could be raised by any one. The King communicated the result of this bloodless revolution to the Emperor Leopold, and to the King of Prussia, both of whom expressed their general approbation of the event, and their particular congratulations on the wise choice which had been made of a successor. The Empress of Russia, however, openly expressed her high displeasure at the presumption of its King, and its representatives, in their resolution to assert their own independence, and an-

nounced her intentions of taking active measures for restoring the former order of things. The new constitution was confirmed by the Dietines, which assembled in the spring of 1792, and the popular voice was decidedly in its favour; nothing, therefore, was wanting to ensure its stability, but the support, or even acquiescence, of the neighbouring states; a material change, however, had taken place in the situation of Europe, and the rapid progress of French principles had excited alarm in the minds of all the continental powers. The Emperor of Germany, and the King of Prussia, were the first to express their apprehensions of the rising danger, and the Empress of Russia had lately warned her subjects, emphatically and successfully, against the fatal contagion. These apprehensions had led the two first of these powers to dread any change in the constitutions of adjoining states; to regard the cry of liberty as the watchword of insurrection; and, consequently, to extend their fears to the late revolution in Poland, which, till now, they had viewed with a favourable eye. The Imperial Catherine, who, in her late proclamation against French principles, had artfully asserted that they would soon ruin Poland, would have been equally hostile to the new Polish constitution, if the French Revolution had never occurred. She had too much sagacity not to perceive, that it differed from the revolution in France in every one of its features, in its object, its end, its means, and its principle; her dread, therefore, of the effects of French principles in Poland, was assumed, for the purpose of giving a colour to the most unjust and tyrannical interference in the internal concerns of an independent state, which unprincipled despotism ever enforced or attempted. On the 18th of May, her Envoy at the



court of Poland, Mr. Non Bulgakow, delivered a declaration to the Diet, by order of his Sovereign, couched in the most insulting terms. Catherine did not scruple to make the partial change in their own constitution, without consulting her pleasure, the subject of complaint and reproach to the Poles. The advocate for monarchy in France, she did not blush to avow herself the champion of republicanism in Poland; an absolute sovereign herself, she did not hesitate to reprobate the union of power in one single hand as utterly incompatible with republican principles; in possession of an hereditary throne, she dared to tax, as an audacious violation of the laws, the conversion of the elective throne of Poland into an hereditary throne; and, lastly, while she punished, with the most rigorous severity, every reflection of her subjects upon her own government, she openly encouraged the seditious and rebellious Poles, and appealed from the lawful rulers of the state to the people! In short, a more unprincipled interference with the internal polity of a foreign state, history does not exhibit. In this declaration, too, which it is impossible to characterize in terms of adequate strength, she accused all those Poles who had sworn obedience to the constitution, and who had formed at least nine tenths of the whole population of the country, with perjury; and she expressed her resolution to send an army into Poland, for the purpose of restoring, by force, the ancient order of things. The King of Prussia, at the same time, determined to remain neuter, though in direct violation of an existing treaty with Poland, concluded in 1790; and the Emperor of Germany adopted the same line of conduct; so that Catherine had now nothing to fear from the unequal efforts of a people, whom she exerted every art to divide. The



Polish government had no difficulty in confuting the fallacies and the falsehoods which the Russian Empress had stooped to adopt in the declaration of her minister. Their answer was firm, temperate, and dignified, and an animated address from the King to his subjects was published about the same time, which produced the desired effect; but the ability to make the necessary preparations for opposing so powerful an enemy, was by no means equal to the public spirit which prevailed. The Empress poured one formidable body of troops into the Ukraine, and another into Lithuania, and in neither place was there any force adequate to a successful resistance. The Poles, however, fought bravely and skilfully; but numbers soon prevailed over courage, and, in less than two months, the Russians, having advanced to within three days' march of the capital, compelled the King to save his throne, by consenting to the abolition of the new constitution. This compulsory act took place on the 23d of July, when an armistice was immediately concluded, and the command of the Polish troops consigned to a Russian general.

During the exhibition of this disgraceful scene in Poland, Sweden became the theatre of a most atrocious occurrence. Gustavus, the heroic monarch of that country, was assassinated, on the 16th of March, at a masquerade at the Opera House in Stockholm, by a person named Ankerstrom, formerly an officer of the guards, who was one of a band of conspirators who had taken offence at some part of the public conduct of the King, and had long had this deed in contemplation. With his dying breath, he pardoned the traitors who had deprived him of life, except the immediate perpetrator of the deed, who, on the

representation of the destined regent, the Duke of Sudermania, was reserved as a victim to offended justice. This Prince, who possessed many great qualities, had rendered his country infinite service, by curtailing the power of a corrupt and turbulent nobility, by increasing the comforts of his people, and by shaking off the degrading yoke of dependance in which the Russian Autocrat had long kept the court and cabinet of Stockholm. Gustavus had entered into the alliance against the revolution in France with all the ardour of his character, but, on his death, the regent determined on preserving a strict neutrality.

The functions of royalty having been suspended in France, by the transactions of the 10th of August, and the virtual deposition of the French monarch, Lord Gower, the English ambassador at Paris, received orders from the court of London to quit the kingdom. M. Chauvelin, the French ambassador, however, still remained in London, though from this period unacknowledged in any public or authorized capacity. The deposition of the French monarch, and the horrid massacres, provocations, and injuries which preceded and produced that event, naturally wrought upon the minds of the generality of the people in England, and struck them with terror at the idea of innovation. In this feeling, an association, openly countenanced by, though not originating with government, was formed in London, for the protection of liberty and property against republicans and levellers; and a multitude of pamphlets, in the popular form of letters, dialogues, and narratives, were circulated by this means throughout the country, inculcating due submission to government. The spirit of this association spread rapidly through the kingdom; and in every county, and almost every



town, resolutions were subscribed strongly expressive of loyalty and attachment to the King and constitution.

Previously to this period, the violent zealots of liberty in England had been accustomed to transmit addresses to the National Convention, declaratory of their applause and admiration. The most remarkable of these, intituled "An Address from several Patriotic Societies in England," was presented, on the 7th of November, at the bar of the Convention, containing, in addition to the usual complimentary expressions, the most indecent and indefensible reflections upon the government and constitution of their own country. "Whilst foreign plunderers ravage your territories, (say these addresses) an oppressed part of mankind, forgetting their own evils, are sensible only of yours, and address their fervent prayers to the God of the universe, that he may be favourable to your cause, with which theirs is so intimately connected. Degraded by an oppressive system of inquisition, the insensible, but continual, encroachments of which quickly deprived this nation of its boasted liberty, and reduced it almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so gloriously emancipated yourselves,—five thousand English citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to step forward to rescue their country from that opprobrium which has been thrown on it by the base conduct of those who are invested with power. We see with concern that the Elector of Hanover unites his troops to those of traitors and robbers; and the King of England will do well to remember that England is not Hanover. Should he forget this, we will not forget it." The president of the Convention, in his answer to this effusion, used expressions full of respect and complacency; and, to crown the absurdity, copies



of the address were ordered to be sent to all the armies and departments of the republic. On the 28th of November, a deputation from the "Society for Constitutional Information" presented an address at the bar of the Convention, congratulating that assembly on the glorious triumph of liberty on the 10th of August, and declared that, notwithstanding the hireling pens which might be employed by the power of government to contradict them, they spoke the sentiments of a majority of the English nation. In the prefatory speech of the deputies, John Frost and Joel Barlow, were expressions yet more seditious than in the address. They took upon them to predict that, after the example given by France, revolutions would become easy. Reason, say they, is about to make a rapid progress; and it would not be extraordinary, if, in a much less space of time than can be imagined, the French should send addresses of congratulation to a National Convention of England. The French president, in reply, paid the highest compliments to the English nation, as having afforded illustrious examples to the universe. "The shades of Hampden and of Sydney (exclaimed he) hover over your heads; and the moment, without doubt, approaches, in which the French will bring congratulations to the national convention of Great Britain. Generous republicans! your appearance among us prepares a subject of history." The speech, the address, and the answer of the president, were ordered to be printed, and sent to the eighty-three departments, and translated into all languages! On the same day a deputation from the British and Irish resident at Paris appeared at the bar, and, amidst loud and reiterated plaudits, they declared their belief, "that the disgraceful memory of those pretended governments, the offspring of the

combined fraud of priests and tyrants, would in a short time alone remain. Our wishes, citizen legislators, render us impatient to behold the happy moment of this great change, in the hope that, on its arrival, we shall see an intimate union formed between the French republic and the English, Irish, and Scottish nations. Nor are we alone animated by these sentiments :—we doubt not that they would be equally conspicuous in the great majority of our fellow countrymen, if the public opinion were to be consulted there, as it ought, in a National Convention.” Again the president answered in a strain of inflated rhetoric. “Principles are waging war against tyranny, which will fall under the blows of philosophy. Royalty in Europe is either destroyed, or on the point of perishing on the ruins of feudality ; and the declaration of rights, placed by the side of thrones, is a devouring fire which shall consume them. Worthy republicans ! congratulate yourselves on thinking that the festival which you have made in honour of the French revolution is the prelude to the festival of nations.”

On the 1st of December, a royal proclamation was issued, announcing that, notwithstanding the late proclamation of the 21st of May, the utmost industry was still employed by evil disposed persons within the kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the laws and constitution ; that a spirit of tumult and disorder, thereby excited, had lately shown itself in acts of riot and insurrection ; and that, these causes moving him thereto, his Majesty had resolved forthwith to embody part of the militia of the kingdom. On the same day another proclamation was issued for convening the Parliament (which stood prorogued to the 3rd of January,



1793) on the 13th of December ; the law requiring, that if the militia be drawn out during the recess, Parliament shall be assembled within the space of fourteen days. At the same time troops were marched to the metropolis, the guard at the Bank was doubled, and the fortifications of the Tower of London were repaired.

On the meeting of Parliament on the day appointed, the expressions of the first proclamation were repeated in the royal speech ; towards the conclusion of which, the King expressed himself as follows :—" I have carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the Continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with respect to the internal government of France : but it is impossible for me to see, without the most serious uneasiness, the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there, of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies, the States General, measures which were neither conformable to the laws of nations, nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties." Under these circumstances his Majesty thought it right to have recourse to those means of prevention and internal defence with which he was intrusted by law, and to make some augmentation of his naval and military force. The address was moved by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir James Sanderson, who stated the aim of the different societies recently established to be the subversion of the constitution. Mr. Fox, on the other hand, declared his belief that all the insinuations in the speech were unfounded, that no insurrection existed, and that the alarm was occa-



sioned only by the artful designs and practices of ministers. He reprobated the system of intellectual oppression which induced them to represent the tumults and disorders that had taken place as designed to overthrow the constitution, and that the various societies instituted for discussing constitutional questions were so many schemes for propagating seditious doctrines. By this new scheme of tyranny, he said, we were not to judge of the conduct of men by their overt acts, but to arrogate to ourselves at once the province and power of the Deity ; we were to arraign a man for his secret thoughts, and to punish him because we chose to believe him guilty ! In the present state of men's minds, and of the ferment artfully created, Mr. Fox was aware that he was advancing opinions likely to be unpopular ; but it was not the first time that he had incurred the same hazard. He was as ready to meet the current of popular opinion now running in favour of those high lay doctrines, as he was in the year 1783 to meet the opposite torrent, when it was said, that he wished to sacrifice the people to the crown. He would do now, as he did then—he would act against the cry of the moment, in the confidence that the reflection of the people would bear him out. “ One extreme,” said he, “ naturally leads to another. Those who dread republicanism, fly for shelter to the crown. Those who desire reform, and are calumniated, are driven by despair to republicanism. And this is the evil that I dread. These are the extremes into which these violent agitations hurry the people, to the gradual decrease of that middle order of men, who dread as much republicanism on the one hand, as they do despotism on the other. That middle order of men, who have hitherto preserved to this country all that is dear

in life, I am sorry to say is daily lessening ; but while my feeble voice continues, it shall not be totally extinct ; there shall at least be one who will, in this ferment of extremes, preserve the centre point." In adverting to the affairs of France, Mr. Fox argued that no man who loved the constitution of England, who felt its principles in his heart, could wish success to the Duke of Brunswick, after reading a manifesto which violated every doctrine that Englishmen hold sacred ; which trampled under foot every principle of justice, humanity, and true government. He was not ready to subscribe exactly to the idea of a resolution, never to go to war unless we were attacked ; but this country never had so much reason to wish for peace, never was a period so little favourable to a rupture with France, or with any power ; and surely it was our duty, as it was our true policy, to exert every means to avert that greatest of national calamities. Mr. Fox concluded a very long and animated speech with moving an amendment, simply pledging the House that inquiry should be made into the facts stated in his Majesty's speech. Mr. Windham felt himself constrained to vote on this occasion with those whose measures he had uniformly and conscientiously reprobated. He was told, he said, that there was no real cause for alarm among the people ; that the only alarm that was felt had been created by government. Government must certainly have had strange and wonderful powers indeed to produce the alarm every day expressed in different parts. He spoke not from mistrust merely, or rumour, but he knew, and it was notorious, that there had been, and was now, a constant communication between persons in Paris and in London, the object of which was the destruction of our present form of government. Mr. Grey supported the amendment. He was no friend to Paine's

doctrines, but he was not to be deterred by a name from acknowledging that he considered the rights of man as the foundation of every government, and those who stood out against these rights as traitors against the people. On the question of a war with France, he would only remark, that a heavy responsibility must fall upon ministers if they had not taken every possible precaution to avert that calamity. Mr. Burke affirmed that there was, a faction in this country who wished to submit it to France, that our government might be reformed upon the French system. The question now was not, he said, whether we should make an address to the throne, but whether we should have a throne at all. Mr. Erskine was convinced that it was the wisdom of that House to govern the people by their affections, to meet their complaints, to redress their grievances, and by granting them a fair representation, remove the ground of their dissatisfaction. The people were already taxed to a most enormous extent, and should a war be the consequence, when it appeared that every precaution had not been taken to prevent it, they would incur a most heavy responsibility, both to the public and to that House, for having precipitated the nation into so great a calamity. After a long debate, the House divided, for the amendment 50, against it 290. In the Lords, the address was carried without a division; but it was strongly opposed by the Duke of Norfolk, and Lords Lansdowne, Rawdon, and Stanhope.

By this time the opposition had suffered a serious defection; in the Upper House, of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Portland, and Lords Fitzwilliam, Spencer, and Loughborough, who, on the resignation of Lord Thurlow at this period, was advanced to the chancellorship; and in the Lower House, Mr.



Burke, Mr. Windham, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Anstruther, &c. who by their secession acquired the appellation of Alarmists. On the bringing up the report, on the succeeding day, however, the debate was resumed; and Mr. Fox moved an amendment, beseeching his Majesty to employ every means of negotiation consistent with the honour and safety of this country, to avert the calamities of war. Mr. Burke affirmed, that to send an ambassador to France would be the prelude to the murder of our sovereign. Mr. Pitt was not at this time a member of the House, having vacated his seat by the acceptance of the wardenship of the Cinque Ports, void by the death of the Earl of Guildford. In his absence, Mr. Dundas entered into a long and able vindication of the measures of administration, and the amendment was negatived without a division. Mr. Fox, however, on the 15th of December, moved, that a minister be sent to Paris to treat with those persons who exercise provisionally the executive government of France. This, he said, implied neither approbation nor disapprobation of the conduct of the existing French government. It was the policy and practice of every nation to treat with the existing government of every other nation, with which it had relative interests, without inquiring how that government was constituted, or by what means it acquired possession of power. Was the existing government of Morocco more respectable than that of France? Yet we had more than once sent embassies thither, to men reeking from the blood through which they had waded to their thrones. We had ministers at the German courts at the time of the infamous partition of Poland. We had a minister at Versailles when Corsica was bought and enslaved. But in none of these instances was any sanction given

directly or indirectly by Great Britain to these nefarious transactions. In answer to the objection, that if we agreed to a negotiation, we should not know with whom to treat, Mr. Whitbread asked if we knew with whom we were going to war. If there was no difficulty in deciding upon that point, how could we pretend to be at a loss to know with whom we were to make peace? Doubtless with that assembly, truly described by his Majesty as exercising the powers of government in France. This motion was also negatived, without a division.

One of the earliest measures of precaution which Mr. Pitt next deemed necessary for the preservation of public order, was a bill for subjecting Aliens to particular regulations and restrictions. The motive which gave rise to this bill was the influx of Frenchmen into the kingdom, some of whom, though the major part were loyal emigrants, came hither for the purpose of maintaining a closer communication with the seditious clubs, and for directing the efforts of their members to the subversion of the constitution. This bill caused a great deal of discussion in both Houses, and occasioned some further declaration of sentiment, on the part of Mr. Fox, and of those who had seceded from his party, respecting the present state of public affairs, both in England and in France, which only served to confirm the difference already known to exist between them. Mr. Burke said, that the exultation which Mr. Fox had manifested, on the success of the French, was totally inconsistent with the dread which he had expressed of the aggrandizement of France; because her aggrandizement was both the object and the consequence of her successes. He expatiated, with his usual energy, on the nature of French fraternization, and of that liberty which



the revolutionists were so anxious to propagate throughout Europe, by plunder and the sword; and which he characterized as a liberty without property, without honour, without morals, without order, without government, and without personal security. These apostles of liberty had boasted of having destroyed the Bastile, while they had converted every man's house in Paris into a Bastile. Mr. Burke quoted the speech of M. Dupont in the Convention, to show that Atheism was the first fruits of French liberty. This man had profligately declared the religion of Jesus Christ to be unfit to be tolerated in a republic, because it was a monarchical religion, and preached subjection and obedience to God! And the Convention received the declaration with loud applause. He pathetically deplored the natural effects of such systematized profligacy, which went to deprive man of all happiness in life, and of all consolation in death. He considered the Alien bill as calculated to save the country, for although the number of suspicious Aliens in the kingdom at this time might be small, yet it should be remembered, that the horrid massacres at Paris, in the preceding autumn, had been perpetrated by a body of men, not exceeding 200. He averred that, at that very moment, 3000 daggers, of a peculiar construction, were manufacturing at Birmingham, under the orders of an individual. How many of these were intended for exportation, and how many were designed for home consumption, had not yet been ascertained. He then produced one of these daggers, and threw it on the floor, exclaiming, "These are the presents which France designs for you—by these would she propagate her freedom and fraternity. But may Heaven avert her principles from our minds, and her



daggers from our hearts." The debates on the bill were renewed in its different stages, when Mr. Fox took the lead in opposing it; but it was finally carried by a decisive majority.

The republican government appeared, during this period, earnestly desirous of conciliating the favour of this country, and averting a war. An event however shortly took place, which added greatly to the horror already excited in England by the atrocities of the French Revolution, and called forth renewed expressions of loyalty and attachment to the constitution from all parts of the kingdom. The Convention was divided into two parties, one of which did not disguise their intention of bringing the King to trial, whilst the moderate party as anxiously meditated to save him, which was a sufficient reason for their antagonists to resolve upon his ruin. This attempt was at once so incompatible with every thing that had long been considered as forming the French character, so devoid of every shadow of justice, and so repugnant to every principle of true policy, that it was scarcely possible to believe, notwithstanding the enormities which had previously taken place, that it could be seriously meditated, much less that the people, the armies, and the constituted authorities of France, would have permitted its accomplishment. Ever since the massacre of the 2d of September, 1792, the Mountain party, or Anarchists, as they were called, had been labouring to wash away the remembrance of their own guilt on that fatal day, in the blood of their sovereign; and in the month of October various motions were introduced into the Convention, and carried by overwhelming majorities, sometimes by acclamation, for the purpose of bringing the King to trial and punishment; and though these measures

were generally opposed by the Girondist party, their eloquence and influence were found insufficient to restrain that implacable and sanguinary disposition, which had taken possession of the breasts of their rivals, and communicated itself to a great part of the population of the metropolis. About this period a discovery was made, which heightened the popular resentment against the unfortunate sovereign, and led to the most important consequences. A workman, who had been employed to form an iron chest or closet in the wall of the Thuilleries, revealed the fact to Roland, the minister of the home department, and conducted him to the place which contained the sacred deposit. This chest was found to contain a great number of correspondences; and a committee consisting of 24 members of the Convention was therefore chosen to inspect the papers, and prepare the act of accusation. On the 6th of November, Valazé read the report; the discussion upon which was immediately followed by the introduction of a question, the most embarrassing to his accusers, and to the Convention: viz. whether the King was not by the constitution invested with perfect and legal inviolability; and whether, consistently with justice, he, whom the law had solemnly pronounced to be above the reach of any legal process, could be brought to trial. This objection was strangely overruled by the Convention, who in this instance established the precedent, always so fatal to liberty, of an *ex post facto* law, and evinced to the eyes of Europe their inattention to those rights of man which the nation had so solemnly proclaimed. Immediately on the act of accusation being passed, the King was forcibly separated from his family; and, contrary to the practice in all criminal cases, in almost every ci-



vilized country, it was decreed that Louis should be brought before the Convention without previous notice or preparation. On the 11th of December, the unfortunate monarch was ordered to the bar of the Convention, and the act of accusation having been read, he was required by the president, Barrere, to answer to each separate charge. After a trial in which the forms of justice, and the principles of law, were violated without scruple, and without reserve, the unfortunate Louis, whose benevolence of heart and mildness of character merited a better fate, was doomed to the scaffold. His execution took place on the 21st of January, and in his last moments he displayed that Christian patience, resignation, and fortitude, which a consciousness of innocence, and a firm confidence in the promises of God, are alone competent to inspire.

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#### CHAPTER XVIII.

THE melancholy fate of Louis the Sixteenth greatly increased the feeling of detestation, with which the principles and practices of the French revolutionists were very generally viewed in this country, and the approach to open hostility became too apparent, on both sides, to leave any doubt of the event. In England it was expected that a general confederacy of the principal powers of Europe must, in the end, prove successful against a new government, full of frenzy and faction; and in France, in addition to the confidence already inspired by victory, an opinion prevailed, that so much disaffection to the established government existed in Great Britain, as could not fail to overturn it in case of a rup-



ture; but so far was this from being the fact, that the war which succeeded was undoubtedly popular in its commencement, the advocates of revolutionary principles being comparatively few in number and influence. Prior to the 10th of August, 1792, when the royal power was suspended in France, the new doctrines promulgated there were viewed by a very considerable portion of the British nation as the laudable exertions of liberty against despotism, but the atrocities which succeeded were so appalling, that almost every one shrunk from avowing the principles, lest he should be thought favourable to the acts by which they were accompanied. Before that period, also, the British court manifested a friendly disposition towards the new constitution in that country, but when the deposition of the monarch was no longer disguised by the party which had acquired the ascendancy, a change in the conduct of the British Cabinet began to display itself, which became more visible as the desire of propagating republican doctrines, and of exciting the people of the neighbouring states against their governments, became more apparent.

On the 27th of December, a memorial was presented by M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, stating that the executive council of the French republic had authorized him to demand, with openness, whether France ought to consider England as a neutral or hostile power; at the same time expressing a strong desire to remain in peace. In allusion to the decree of the 19th of November, he denied that the French republic would favour insurrections or excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever, and declared that France would not attack Holland so long as she adhered to the principles of her neutrality. On the 31st, Lord Grenville in reply ac-

quainted M. Chauvelin that, as all official communication with France had been suspended since the unhappy events of the 10th of August, he could only be treated with under a form neither regular nor official; his lordship, however, said, that if France was really desirous of maintaining peace with England, she must renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and confine herself within her own territory. In answer to this letter, M. le Brun, minister of foreign affairs, transmitted a memorial in the name of the executive council, on the 4th of January, 1793, repeating the assurances of their sincere desire to maintain peace and harmony, and stating that they had sent credential letters to M. Chauvelin, to enable him to treat according to the severity of diplomatic forms. France, they repeated, renounced all conquests, and her occupation of the Netherlands would continue no longer than the war. The explanations contained in this paper were deemed unsatisfactory by Lord Grenville; M. Chauvelin's letters of credence were rejected; and on the 24th of January he was ordered to quit the kingdom within eight days. On the 25th, the English ambassador at the Hague, Lord Auckland, addressed a memorial to the States General, in which were the following remarkable expressions: "Not four years ago some wretches, assuming the title of philosophers, had the presumption to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize that dream of their vanity, they found it necessary to overthrow and destroy all received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which have hitherto formed all the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects



of the new system which they endeavoured to introduce, served only to show the imbecility and villany of its authors. The events which so rapidly followed each other, since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which have ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed playthings in the hands of infamous men, who are slaves to the most licentious passions—of rapine, enmity, and ambition.” The state of the whole European world at this crisis could not be contemplated without the deepest anxiety. War, at all times to be deplored, was more to be avoided when the absolute necessity for our interference was not sufficiently apparent. We had formed treaties with monarchs who had ascended thrones stained with blood; we had beheld with indifference the shameful partition of Poland; and although the excesses which had attended the French revolution could not be viewed without horror, there was nothing directly affecting England which might not possibly have been removed by negotiation; indeed, if it could have been foreseen that the wars of the French revolution would have been so long and desolating—attended with such a cost of blood and treasure—it cannot be doubted, that both ministers and people would have been more earnest in their endeavours to avert such a calamity. The soundest politicians that have directed the public affairs of this country, Burleigh, Clarendon, Walpole, and Chatham, have all declared against continental wars and continental alliances, which, even in their time, were represented as draining Britain of its wealth. Could either of these great men have imagined the possibility of that accumulation of national debt which the events that



we are now recording occasioned, what would have been their predictions?

On the 28th of January, a message from the King was sent to both Houses of Parliament, informing them, that he had given directions for laying before them copies of several papers, which had been received from M. Chauvelin, by the secretary of state, and the answers thereto, and likewise a copy of an order made by his Majesty in council, and transmitted by his Majesty's commands, to the said M. Chauvelin, in consequence of the accounts of the atrocious act recently perpetrated at Paris. In the present situation of affairs, his Majesty thought it indispensably necessary to make a further augmentation of his forces by sea and land; and relied on the known affection and zeal of the House of Commons, to enable him to take the most effectual measures, in the present important juncture, for maintaining the security and rights of his own dominions; for supporting his allies; and for opposing views of aggrandizement and ambition on the part of France, which would be, at all times, dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but were peculiarly so, when connected with the propagation of principles which led to the violation of the most sacred duties, and were utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society.

On the 1st of February, the very day on which a decree was unanimously passed by the National Convention, declaring the republic of France at war with the King of Great Britain, and the Stadtholder of Holland, this message was taken into consideration by the House of Commons, when Mr. Pitt took an extensive view of the subjects, both foreign and domestic, to which the message related. In the course of

his speech, and in illustration of the sentiments and designs of the French rulers, he read a letter from one of them, Monge, addressed to the friends of liberty in the different sea-ports of France, and bearing date the 31st of December, 1792, only four days after a communication from Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, which complained that a harsh construction had been put by the British ministry on the conduct of France, and professed the strongest friendship for Great Britain. In this letter England and Spain were represented as two tyrannical governments, which, after persecuting the patriots in their own territories, thought they should be able to influence the judgment to be pronounced on the tyrant Louis; but the people of France would not suffer laws to be dictated to them by a tyrant. "The King and his Parliament mean to make war against us! Will the English republicans suffer it? Already these free men show their discontent, and the repugnance which they have to bear arms against their brothers, the French. Well! we will fly to their succour; we will make a descent on the island; we will lodge there 50,000 caps of liberty; we will plant there the sacred tree, and we will stretch out our arms to our republican brethren: the tyranny of their government will soon be destroyed. Let every one of us be strongly impressed with this idea." Such was the declaration of the sentiments of the minister of the Marine; a declaration which separated the King and the Parliament from the people, who were called republicans. What faith could be put in assurances, given on the part of France by Chauvelin on the 27th of December, when, in four days after, a member of the French government was found writing such a letter? It was highly proper, therefore, said Mr. Pitt, to reject such

explanations as those which had been offered only to deceive; the conduct of France was inconsistent with the peace and liberty of Europe; the French had given no satisfaction with respect to the question at issue; they had, indeed, offered what they called explanations, but their principles, and the whole tenour of their conduct, were such, that no faith could be put in their declarations. Instead of giving satisfaction on the distinct articles on which we had a right to claim a clear and precise explanation, and instead of showing any desire to abandon their views of conquest and aggrandizement, to return within their ancient limits, and to set barriers to the progress of their destructive arms, and to their principles, still more destructive—instead of doing this, they had, by way of explanation, avowed their determination to persist in those practices which constituted the very ground of complaint. If France was really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must show herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights. Unless she consented to these terms, whatever might be the wishes of the British nation for peace, the final issue must be war. But, as to the time when the war was to commence, if there were yet any possibility of satisfactory explanation, and security for the future, it was not to the last moment precluded. Mr. Pitt said, however, that he should disguise his sentiments to the House, if he stated, that he thought an accommodation in any degree probable. The country had always been desirous of peace, it was so still, but of such a peace as might be real and solid, and consistent with the interests and



dignity of Britain, and with the general security of Europe. War, whenever it came, would be preferable to peace without honour, without security, and incompatible either with the external safety, or internal happiness, of the country. Mr. Pitt, after he had fully developed his sentiments on the important question at issue, moved an address, thanking his Majesty for his communication; offering him the heartfelt condolence of the House, on the atrocious act lately perpetrated at Paris; expressing their sense of the aggressive and ambitious conduct of France; declaring their opinion of the necessity of a vigorous opposition to such conduct, and to the principles out of which it arose; and promising to make the necessary provision for a further augmentation of the national forces by sea and land.

A very animated debate ensued, in the course of which, Mr. Fox declared his opinion of the non-existence of any danger to this country, and strongly deprecated a war. The crimes, the murders, and the massacres, that had been committed in France, he did not view with less horror than those who made them the perpetual theme of their declamation: the condemnation and execution of the King, he pronounced an act as disgraceful as any that history recorded; but the general maxim of policy always was, that the crimes perpetrated in one independent state were not cognizable by another. The people were the sovereigns in every state; they had a right to change the form of their government, and a right to cashier their governors for misconduct, as the people of this country cashiered James the Second, not by a Parliament, or any regular form known to the constitution, but by a convention speaking the sense of the people; that convention produced a Parliament and a King. They elected William to a vacant

throne, not only setting aside James, whom they had justly cashiered for misconduct, but his innocent son. Again, they elected the house of Brunswick, not individually, but by dynasty; and that dynasty to continue while the terms and conditions on which it was elected were fulfilled, and no longer. He could not admit the right of doing all this but by acknowledging the sovereignty of the people as paramount to all other laws. War, it was to be lamented, was a passion inherent in the nature of man; and it was curious to observe what at various periods had been the various pretexts. In ancient times wars were made for conquest. To these succeeded wars for religion; and the opinions of Luther and Calvin were attacked with all the fury of superstition and of power. The next pretext was commerce; and it would probably be allowed that no nation that made war for commerce ever found the object accomplished on concluding peace. Now we were to make war about opinions; what was this but recurring again to an exploded cause? for a war about principles in religion was as much a war about opinions, as a war about principles in politics. Of all wars he dreaded that the most which had no definite object, because of such a war it was impossible to see the end. The address upon this occasion was carried without a division.

A few days afterwards, the intelligence was received that France had declared war against Great Britain and Holland; and on the 11th of February, 1793, a royal message was delivered to the two Houses of Parliament, announcing that "the Assembly, now exercising the powers of government in France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations,



and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against his Majesty and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, his Majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honour of his crown, and to vindicate the rights of his people; and his Majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a just and necessary war; and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice. In a cause of such general concern, his Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and in contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe." Upon this occasion, Mr. Pitt adverted to those insults which the French supposed they had previously received from England, and which they stated as grounds for their declaration of war; namely, "that the King of England has not ceased, especially since the revolution of the 10th of August, 1792, to give proofs of his being evil disposed towards the French nation, and of his attachment to the coalition of crowned heads. That the cabinet of St. James's has ceased since the same period to correspond with the French ambassador at London, on pretext of the suspension of the heretofore King of the French. That since the opening of the national convention, the



said cabinet has refused to resume the usual correspondence between the two states, and to acknowledge the power of the convention. That it has refused to acknowledge the ambassador of the French republic, although provided with letters of credit in its name. That the said court has caused to be stopped several boats and ships loaded with grain for France, contrary to the treaty of 1786, while exportations to other countries were free." After examining the several articles of the French declaration, Mr. Pitt concluded with asserting, that he found in it nothing but pretexts and allegations too weak to require refutation. We had in every instance, he said, observed the strictest neutrality with respect to France: we had pushed to its utmost extent the system of temperance and moderation: we had waited to the last moment for satisfactory explanation. He then moved the address to the throne. Mr. Fox contended, that every step on our part had seemed to indicate a desire to break with France. To have continued Earl Gower at Paris, after the event of the 10th of August, would have implied no recognition of the validity of the government which succeeded to the monarchy, nor approbation of their proceedings: and it was certainly more eligible to treat in a direct, than an indirect mode, with those who exercised the powers of government. As the prohibition of exporting corn to France, when it was allowed to other countries, was a positive infraction of the subsisting treaty, and the order received by M. Chauvelin to depart the kingdom was an act of open hostility on our part, he could not allow the declaration of war to be an unprovoked aggression on that of France; he moved, therefore, an amendment to the proposed address, but it was negatived without a division.

Notwithstanding the predominant voice for war which now prevailed in and out of Parliament, this extremity appeared, to the opposition, a greater evil than any with which the nation was threatened, and Mr. Fox, who spared no exertion of his eloquence to avert the evil, introduced, on the 18th of February, a series of resolutions, stating that war with France, on the grounds alleged, was neither for the honour nor the interest of this country; that ministers, in their late negociations with the French government, had not taken the proper means for procuring an amicable redress of the grievances complained of; and that it was their duty to advise his Majesty against entering into engagements which might prevent a separate peace. Mr. Fox alleged that his object in making these motions was to pronounce a declaration of the precise grounds upon which gentlemen had voted for the war, for from many circumstances he was well persuaded, that the real objects of our ministers in going to war were those which they disclaimed; and that those which they avowed were only pretexts. The motion, after a warm debate, was rejected by 270 against 44. A motion by Mr. Grey, on the 21st of February, for an address to his Majesty, expressing at great length the opinion that the differences between this country and France might have been adjusted by negociation, and requesting him to embrace the first opportunity of restoring peace, was negatived without a division.

The erection of barracks in different parts of the kingdom being considered by many as unconstitutional, Mr. M. A. Taylor, on the 22d of February, brought the subject before Parliament, when, after quoting various opinions to prove the illegality of the measure, he said, that the whole system of minis-



ters showed a design to curb and overawe the people by the bayonet and the sword, instead of applying, if necessary, the wholesome correction of the laws. He did not enter into any argument with respect to the King's rights, in virtue of his prerogative, of erecting barracks; but he thought it the duty of ministers to have informed the House of their intention to do so, and of the reasons which induced them to think it a measure either prudent or necessary. He concluded with moving, "that it is the opinion of this House, that the uniform and persevering opposition of our ancestors, from time to time, to the erecting barracks in this country, was founded upon a just sense of the true principles of our most excellent constitution, and that the opinion has been justified, upon high, legal, and political authority, that the soldiers should live intermixed with the people, in order that they might be connected with them; and that no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortresses, should be allowed." The motion was rejected.

Mr. Sheridan, on the 4th of March, moved, that the House should, on the succeeding Monday, resolve itself into a committee, to consider of the seditious practices, &c. referred to in his Majesty's speech. The object of his motion he stated to be, an inquiry into the truth of those reports which asserted the existence of sedition in this country, and also to know whether the language made use of by his Majesty's ministers upon the subject was not at least premature. He made a variety of remarks to prove that government and its agents had created the alarm, for the express purpose of diverting the attention of the public for a time, and afterwards leading them more easily into a war. Mr. Windham opposed the motion, and said it was notorious that



the country, at the period alluded to, teemed with seditious publications. Mr. Fox said, that he and his friends desired to be convinced; he was still incredulous, and should vote for inquiry, which was never more necessary than when the situation of the country was apprehended to be dangerous; Mr. Sheridan's motion, however, was negatived without a division.

On the 6th of March a message from the King was presented to Parliament, stating that he had engaged a body of his electoral troops in the service of Great Britain, for the purpose of assisting his allies, the States General, and that he had directed an estimate of the charge to be laid before the House. In a committee of supply on the 11th, Mr. Pitt brought forward his budget for the current year, estimating the total of the expenses at 11,182,213*l.* and of the ways and means at 8,299,696*l.* The deficiency he proposed to raise by loan, and to defray the interest by making permanent the temporary taxes imposed upon occasion of the Spanish armament. In the course of his speech, Mr. Pitt made some remarks which show how little he then contemplated the excessive increase of the national debt, and of the taxation consequent thereon, which has since taken place. "I do not think it useless (said he) to suggest some observations with respect to this war in which we are engaged. The excess of the permanent revenue, if kept up, is no less than 900,000*l.* above the peace establishment; which, *even if destroyed by war*, will leave the country in possession of all its ordinary revenue. This 900,000*l.* I have not taken into my reasoning or calculations, because I was desirous to leave it as a security against those contingencies to which war is liable." The sum bor-

rowed was 4,500,000*l.*, and the terms were, that for every 72*l.* advanced to the public, the lender should be entitled to 100*l.* stock, bearing 3 *per cent.* Mr. Pitt said that he expected to have made better terms for the loan, but he had not received two offers on the occasion. Among other resources, the sum of 675,000*l.* was agreed to be raised by lottery, after a debate in which several regulations were laid down to diminish the practice of insurance: the principle of the measure, however, again excited considerable opposition.

On the 15th of March, the Attorney-General, Sir John Scott, afterwards Lord-Chancellor Eldon, introduced his "Traitorous Correspondence Bill," by which it was not only, according to precedent, declared to be high-treason to supply the existing government of France with military stores, &c. but to purchase lands of inheritance in France, to invest money in any of the French funds, to underwrite insurances upon ships and goods bound from France to any part of the world, or to go from this country to France, without a license under the privy seal. It likewise prohibited the return of such British subjects as were already there, unless on giving security to the government. This bill met with much opposition, and several of its more obnoxious clauses were modified in the course of its progress. In the Lords it was also rigorously opposed, and received several alterations, which were agreed to by the Commons, and the bill finally passed into a law.

On the 2nd of April, M. Le Brun, minister of foreign affairs in France, addressed a letter to Lord Grenville, stating that the French republic was desirous to terminate all its differences with Great Britain, and to end a war dreadful to humanity, and



requesting a passport for a person vested with full powers for that purpose to the court of London. In a separate letter, he named M. Maret as the proposed plenipotentiary of France, should this intimation produce the desired effect; the present state of affairs, however, did not, it appears, permit the British government to accede to such an overture, no notice whatever being taken of the application: on the contrary, a treaty was about this time concluded with the King of Sardinia, by which England bound herself to furnish to his Sardinian Majesty a subsidy of 200,000*l. per annum*, to be paid three months in advance, and not to conclude a peace with the enemy, without comprehending in it the entire restitution of all the dominions belonging to this monarch previously to the commencement of the war.

When Parliament met, after the Easter recess, its attention was attracted by the unusual number and extent of the bankruptcies, which had taken place since the commencement of the war. A select committee was immediately appointed to report their opinion to the House, on the best means of applying a remedy to this evil, and they recommended an issue of exchequer bills, to the amount of 5,000,000*l.*, to commissioners nominated for the purpose, for the assistance and accommodation of such mercantile persons as might apply, and who should give proper security for the sums that might be advanced on interest, for a time to be limited. This relief proved extremely beneficial.

On the 25th of April, Mr. Sheridan called the attention of the House to the late memorial of Lord Auckland to the States General; which, in his view of the subject, implied that the war was carried on for the purpose of extermination. He accordingly



moved an address to his Majesty, expressive of the displeasure of the House at the memorial in question; and stating, that the minister who presented it had departed from the principles on which the House had concurred in the measures for the support of the war. Mr. Pitt defended Lord Auckland, and maintained the right of Britain to repel the unjust attacks of France; to chastise and punish her; and to obtain indemnification for the past, and security for the future. The motion of Mr. Sheridan was rejected by 211 against 36. Lord Stanhope's motion, in the Peers, similar to Mr. Sheridan's, ended in an amendment, by Lord Grenville, pronouncing the memorial conformable to the sentiments of his Majesty, and consonant to those principles of justice and policy which it became the honour and dignity of the nation to express; which was carried without a division.

On the 6th of May, Mr. Grey brought forward his promised motion for a reform in the representation. He commenced by observing, in reply to the objection of this being an improper time for reform, that it would be equally rational in times of prosperity and adversity, in times of war and of peace. If our situation happened to be prosperous, it was then asked, whether we could be more than happy, or more than free. In the season of adversity, on the other hand, all reform or renovation was deprecated, from the pretended risk of increasing the evil and pressure of our situation. Hence it would appear that the time for reform never yet had come, and never would come. By arguments such as these had reform been hitherto combated; and by the like he believed it ever would be attacked, until some dreadful convulsion should take place, which might threaten even the constitution itself with annihilation. He quoted

an opinion given judicially by Lord Thurlow, on an appeal from Scotland, respecting the right of voters at elections, that if the question could be tried in a court of law in England, as it was in Scotland, he was convinced that an English court would not be satisfied that a nobleman's steward should go down to a borough, with ten or twelve pieces of parchment in his hand, containing each the qualification for a vote, and having assembled a sufficient number of his master's tenants round a table, should distribute among them the parchments; then propose a candidate; and afterwards collect these parchments, and declare his lord's friend duly elected for the borough. These elections Lord Thurlow called a mockery. Mr. Erskine said that the only remedy for the abuses complained of in the numerous petitions which had been presented was to simplify and equalize the franchise of election, to make each body of electors too large for individual corruption, and the period of choice too short for temptation, and, by the subdivision of the places of election, to bring the electors together without confusion, and within every man's reach. Sir William Young declared his opinion, that the country had too much of a commercial turn, and that boroughs bought and controlled by men of property formed the only balance to the commercial influence, which was increasing by too rapid strides, and which ought to be checked. Mr. Francis quoted a letter from the Earl of Chesterfield to his son, purporting, that he had offered 2,500*l.* for a secure seat in Parliament, but that the borough-jobber laughed, and told him that the rich East and West Indians had secured them all, at the rate of 3,000*l.* at least. Thus the case stood twenty years ago, and he was convinced that corruption had increased, was in-



creasing, and ought to be diminished. Mr. Pitt explained his former motives for being friendly to a parliamentary reform, and his objections against it at the present moment. If the principle of individual suffrage pointed at in several of the petitions was to be carried to its utmost extent, it went, he said, to subvert the peerage, and to depose the King; and, *in fine*, to extinguish every hereditary distinction, and every privileged order, and to establish that system of equalizing anarchy announced in the code of French legislation, and attested in the blood of the massacres at Paris. Mr. Fox observed, that as Lord Foppington in the play said, "I begin to think that when I was a commoner I was a very nauseous fellow," so Mr. Pitt began to think, that when he was a reformer he must have been a very foolish fellow: the objection to the time for reform he called a fallacy, a mere pretext for putting off what the House could not help seeing to be necessary, but felt unwilling to begin. The debate occupied two days; when the motion for referring the petitions to a committee was negatived, by 282 against 41.

In the course of the session, Mr. Dundas brought in a bill, which, soon after, passed into an act, to renew the charter of the East India Company for twenty years, upon terms which varied little from the former charter. Mr. Wilberforce made several unsuccessful motions for the abolition of the slave trade, but the formality of examining evidence at the bar of the House of Lords procrastinated this business, and left it still in suspense; a bill to relieve the Roman Catholics of Scotland from certain penalties and disabilities, imposed upon them by acts which incapacitated them from holding or transmitting landed property, was passed without opposition;



and towards the close of the session 3,000*l.* *per annum* was voted for the establishment of a board of agriculture, on the recommendation of Sir John Sinclair.

The trial of Mr. Hastings was resumed on the 15th of February, and during the session the court sat twenty-two days, in which time the counsel for the prisoner completed the defence set up by them on the three last articles, *viz.* *begums*, presents, and contracts; after which Mr. Hastings addressed the court, praying that their lordships would order the trial, now past its legal process, to continue to its final conclusion during the present session. On the 18th of April a petition was presented to the House, complaining of the enormity of the delays which had taken place, and earnestly repeating his request; the farther proceedings, however, were adjourned till the ensuing session.

On the 21st of June, the King prorogued the Parliament; on which occasion his Majesty noticed the rapid and signal successes which had, in an early period of the campaign, attended the operations of the combined armies; the respectable and powerful force which he had been enabled to employ by sea and land; and the measures which he had concerted with other powers for the effectual prosecution of the war; all of which afforded the best prospect of a happy issue to the important contest in which we were engaged.

The Parliament of Ireland was convened at Dublin by the Earl of Westmorland, Lord Lieutenant of that kingdom, on the 10th of January. The English cabinet, conceiving that some measures of redress must now be adopted in relation to the Catholics, instructed his lordship, in the course of his speech to

the two Houses at the opening of the present session, thus to express himself:—"I have it in particular command from his Majesty, to recommend it to you to apply yourselves to the consideration of such measures as may be the most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment, among all classes and descriptions of his Majesty's Catholic subjects, in support of the established constitution. With this view his Majesty trusts that the situation of his Catholic subjects will engage your serious attention, and in the consideration of this subject he relies on the wisdom and liberality of his Parliament." Early in March the Bill of Relief was brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Secretary Hobart. Its chief enacting clause enabled the Catholics to exercise and enjoy all civil and military offices, and places of trust or profit under the crown, under certain restrictions,—that it should not be construed to extend to enable any Roman Catholic to sit or vote in either House of Parliament, or to fill the office of Lord Lieutenant or Lord Chancellor, or Judge in either of the three courts of Record or Admiralty, or keeper of the privy-seal, secretary of state, lieutenant or custos rotulorum of counties, or privy-counsellor, or master in Chancery, or a general on the staff, or sheriff or sub-sheriff of any county, &c. The bill passed, with few dissentient voices; and though it stopped short of full emancipation, it was supposed to be all that the executive government could, at this time, without too violent an exertion, effect; and upon this account it was received with gratitude and satisfaction. As a farther concession to Ireland, a Libel Bill passed, similar to that of Mr. Fox in England; the power of the crown to grant pensions on the Irish establishment was limited to the sum of 80,000*l.*, and certain

descriptions of placemen and pensioners were excluded from the privilege of sitting in the House of Commons. Also, the King declared his acceptance of a limited sum, fixed at 225,000*l.* for the expenses of his civil list, in lieu of the hereditary revenues of the crown. Alien and Traitorous Correspondence Bills, analogous to those of England, were also passed; as was a bill "to prevent the election or appointment of assemblies, purporting to represent the people, or any description or number of the people, under pretence of preparing or presenting petitions, &c. to the King, or either House of Parliament, for alteration of matters established by law, or redress of alleged grievances in church or state."

In the winter of 1792, General Dumouriez had proposed to the executive council to take possession of Maestricht, without which, he alleged, neither the passage of the Meuse nor the territory of Liege could be defended; engaging, by manifesto, to restore it to the Dutch at the end of the war. As soon as war had been decided upon, General Dumouriez hastened to put into execution the plan he had formed, to advance with a body of troops, posted at the Moerdyke, and masking Breda and Gertruydenburg on the right, and Bergen-op-Zoom, Klundert, and Williamstadt, on the left, to effect a passage over an arm of the sea to Dordt, and thus penetrate at once into the heart of Holland. General Miranda had directions, leaving General Valence before Maestricht, to march with all expedition to Nimeguen, in order to oppose the expected invasion of the Prussians on that side. Dumouriez, assembling his army in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, entered the Dutch territory on the 17th of February, 1793. On the 24th, Breda surrendered, through the cowardice or treachery of its governor,



Count Byland, almost on the first summons; the fort of Klundert was taken, after a brave defence, on the 26th; and nine days afterwards, Gertruydenburg followed the example of Breda; but Williamstadt made an obstinate resistance; and while the French troops were still engaged in the siege of this little fortress, intelligence arrived, from the eastern frontier of the Netherlands, which materially changed the aspect of the war. On the 1st of March, General Clairfait, having suddenly passed the Roer in the night, attacked the French posts on that side, and compelled them to retreat as far as Alderhaven, with the loss of 2000 men. Next day, the Archduke, brother to the Emperor of Germany, carried several batteries, and took nine pieces of cannon. On the 3d, the Prince of Saxe Cobourg, who had highly distinguished himself in the war with the Turks, obtained a signal advantage over General Valence and his army, driving them from Aix-la-Chapelle to the vicinity of Liege, with the loss of 5000 men, and twenty pieces of cannon. The siege of Maestricht was immediately raised; and, at midnight, on the 4th, General Miranda gave orders for retreating to Tongres, whence the French armies were again compelled to fall back to St. Tron, where Miranda was joined by General Valence, who had by this time evacuated Liege and its territory; and on the 8th they moved towards Tirlemont. Dumouriez now arrived to take the command in person, leaving the conduct of affairs on the northern frontier to General de Flers. The Prussians advanced by way of Bois-le-Duc. A corps of 12,000 Hanoverians, reinforced by several thousand British troops, with the Duke of York at their head, arrived nearly at the same time in Holland; and the siege of Williamstadt was raised. Instead of proceeding to Dordt, De Flers

was compelled to throw himself into Breda, the main body of the army retiring precipitately to Antwerp. On the 18th of March, a general engagement took place on the plains of Neerwinden, which continued from morning till evening, when the French were totally routed, with considerable loss. The French continued retreating; and, on the 21st, General Dumouriez was posted near Louvain. Here a virtual suspension of hostilities took place, and the French army was allowed to march back to their own frontier, without molestation, on condition of evacuating Brussels, and all the other towns of Brabant, &c. in their possession.

On the 27th, General Dumouriez held a conference with an Austrian officer of distinction, Colonel Mack, to whom he intimated his design of marching against Paris, with a view of re-establishing the constitutional monarchy of 1791: and it was agreed that the Imperialists should act merely as auxiliaries in the accomplishment of this plan; not advancing, except in case of necessity, beyond the frontier of France. The designs of Dumouriez did not, however, pass unsuspected at Paris, and three commissioners from the executive power had been dispatched to Flanders, under the pretence of conferring with the general concerning the affairs of Belgium. In this interview Dumouriez expressed himself with great violence against the Jacobins. "They would ruin France," said he; "but I will save it, though they should call me a Cæsar, a Cromwell, or a Monk." He styled the Convention a horde of ruffians; and declared, that this assembly would not exist three weeks longer; that France must have a King; adding, that since the battle of Gemappe, he had wept over his success in so bad a cause. On the return of the commission-

ers to Paris, Dumouriez was summoned to appear at the bar of the Convention, and M. Bournonville was appointed to supersede him. Four new commissioners also were deputed to the army of the north, with powers to suspend and arrest all officers who should fall under their suspicion. On their arrival at Lisle, March the 28th, the commissioners transmitted their orders to General Dumouriez, to appear before them, and answer the charges against him; the general, however, having fully arranged his plan, replied, that, in the present exigent circumstances, he could not leave the army for a moment; that when he did enter Lisle, it would be in order to purge it of traitors; and that he valued his head too much to submit it to an arbitrary tribunal. The commissioners now resolved to proceed to the camp; but they soon found how dangerous was the attempt to seize the person of a general at the head of his army. On the 1st of April, they arrived, in company with M. Bournonville, at St. Amand, the head-quarters of General Dumouriez; and being admitted to his presence, explained to him the object of their mission. After a long conference, the general, finding them inflexible in their purpose, gave the signal for a body of soldiers, who were in waiting, and ordered M. Bournonville and the four commissioners, in the number of whom was the noted M. Camus, immediately to be conveyed to General Clairfait's head-quarters at Tournay, as hostages for the safety of the royal family of France.

Notwithstanding the popularity of Dumouriez, symptoms soon appeared in the army of high dissatisfaction at this act of violence. On the morning of the 3d, Dumouriez repaired to the camp of Maulde, and addressed the troops, amidst the murmurs of many



of the battalions. On the next day he departed with his suite for Condé, which fortress, with Valenciennes, he had engaged to put into the hands of the Austrians: but on the road he received intelligence, that it would not be safe for him to enter the place; and, in making his retreat, he fell in with a column of volunteer guards, who called to him to surrender; but, trusting to the swiftness of his horse, he escaped, with great difficulty, to the quarters of General Mack, through a dreadful discharge of musketry. His example was followed by General Lamorliere, the Duc de Chartres, son of the Duke of Orleans, and some hundreds of private soldiers. On the following day appeared a proclamation from General Dumouriez, containing a recapitulation of his services to the French republic, an animated picture of the outrages of the Jacobins, and of the mischiefs to be apprehended from a continuation of anarchy in France, concluding with an exhortation to the French to restore the constitution of 1791, and a declaration on oath that he bore arms only for that purpose. This proclamation was accompanied by a manifesto on the part of the Prince of Cobourg, now commander-in-chief of the armies of Austria, announcing, that the allied powers were no longer to be considered as principals, but merely as auxiliaries, in the war; that they had no other object than to co-operate with the general, in giving to France her constitutional King, and the constitution she formed for herself. By this time, however, Antwerp, Breda, and the other conquests of France on the Dutch frontier, were evacuated; and a considerable change had taken place in the aspect of affairs. On the 8th of April, a grand council was held at Antwerp, at which were present the Prince of Orange, accompanied by the grand pen-

sionary, Vander Spiegel, the Prince of Cobourg, Counts Metternich, Stahremberg, &c. also the Prussian, Spanish, and Neapolitan ambassadors. The whole plan of operations were now changed. At the same time, a memorial was presented by Lord Auckland, (April the 5th,) to the States General, in which his lordship stated, in allusion to the capture of M. Camus, and the other conventional commissioners, "That the Divine vengeance, for the atrocious crime which had been by their High Mightinesses with horror foreseen, seemed not to have been tardy. Some of these detestable regicides are now," said his lordship, "in such a situation, that they can be subjected to the sword of the law; the rest are still in the midst of a people, whom they have plunged into an abyss of evils, and for whom famine, anarchy, and civil war, are about to prepare new calamities. In short, every thing that we see happen induces us to consider as not far distant the end of these wretches, whose madness and atrocities have filled with terror and indignation all those who respect the principles of religion, morality, and humanity. The undersigned, therefore, submit, to the enlightened judgment and wisdom of your High Mightinesses, whether it would not be proper to employ all the means in your power, to prohibit from entering your states in Europe, or your colonies, all those members of the pretended National Convention, or of the pretended executive council, who have directly or indirectly participated in the said crime; and, if they should be discovered and arrested, to deliver them up to justice, that they may serve as a lesson and example to mankind." To this memorial the Dutch government declined any reply.

General Dampierre, an officer distinguished by his

conduct and valour, was now provisionally appointed to the chief command, and in a short time he was enabled to lead his troops with confidence into action. From the middle of April to the 8th of May, a variety of partial, though sharp and bloody, engagements took place between the two armies, in which no decisive advantage was gained. On that day, General Dampierre advanced in person to dislodge a large body of the enemy, posted near the wood of Vicoigne; but, exposing himself to the enemy's fire, his thigh was carried off by a cannon ball, and he died the following day. In this action the English troops were engaged in the field for the first time in this war, and behaved with all their characteristic intrepidity; but by the inexperience of the Duke of York, their commander, being ordered to the attack of a strong post in the wood, where they were exposed to the fire of some masked batteries, they suffered so much, that it was not thought expedient to make any official return of the killed and wounded. The siege of Valenciennes being now in contemplation of the Prince of Cobourg, it was determined by the allies to attempt an attack upon the fortified camp of Famars, which protected and covered that important fortress, Condé being already invested. At day-break, on the 23d of May, the British and Hanoverians under their royal commander, and the Austrians and German auxiliaries under the Prince of Cobourg and General Clairfait, made a joint assault upon the advanced posts of the French. The contest was severe, but the French were evidently worsted, and in the course of the night they abandoned their camp, retreating towards Bouchain and Cambray. This success enabled the allies to lay siege in form to Valenciennes. On the 1st of June, General Custine arrived to take the com-



mand of the armies of the North and the Ardennes; but he deemed himself unequal to the task of rendering effectual relief to that fortress, before which the trenches were opened on the 14th of that month; and, towards the beginning of July, the besiegers were able to bring 200 pieces of heavy artillery to play upon it. Mines and counter-mines innumerable were formed also in the course of this siege, both by the assailants and the garrison; and many fierce subterranean conflicts were carried on with various success. On the night of the 25th of July, however, those under the glacis and horn-work of the fortress were sprung, on the part of the besiegers, with complete success, and the English and Austrians seized the favourable moment for attacking the covered way, of which they made themselves masters. On the next day, the place surrendered on honourable terms of capitulation, the Duke of York taking possession of it, in behalf of the Emperor of Germany. Nearly at the same time the garrison of Condé yielded themselves prisoners of war, after enduring all the rigours of famine; and Mentz submitted, not without a long and resolute resistance, to the arms of Prussia.

On the 8th of August, the French were driven from the strong position they occupied behind the Scheldt, which was known by the name of Cæsar's Camp; after which a grand council of war was held, wherein it was determined that the British, Hanoverians, Dutch, and Hessians, should form a distinct army, not dependant upon the co-operation of the Austrians. This was strongly opposed by the Prince of Cobourg and General Clairfait; the British army, however, conducted by the Duke of York, immediately decamped, and, on the 18th of August, arrived in the vicinity of Menin, where some severe contests took

place, and the post of Lincelles, lost by the Dutch, was recovered at the point of the bayonet, with a signal display of spirit and intrepidity, by the English, though very inferior in force, led on by General Sir John Lake. Moving, with little resistance, towards Dunkirk, the trenches were opened before that fortress on the 24th; and the Duke of York, having entertained a secret correspondence with the Governor-General, O'Moran, flattered himself with obtaining speedy possession of the place; that officer, however, had been removed, and the duke lost so much time, from the delay in the arrival of his heavy artillery, and the want of the early co-operation of a naval force, that the French were enabled to make great preparations for the defence, before any progress had been made, and the result was, that the duke found himself obliged to raise the siege, leaving behind him his battering cannon, and a large quantity of ammunition. On the other side, General Clairfait invested the town of Quesnoy; and the Prince of Cobourg, who commanded the covering army, having defeated a body of troops which had been sent for its relief, the place surrendered on the 11th of September. The Austrians then laid siege to Maubeuge; but the French, under General Jourdan, attacked them in their trenches, on the 15th of October, and, after sustaining a great loss, forced them to raise the siege. Various incursions were afterwards made by the French into Maritime Flanders, but, unable to establish a footing there, they were compelled, once more, to retire within their own frontier. In the course of the year, Pondicherry, and all the French settlements in the east, were reduced by the British arms; and the island of Tobago, in the West Indies,

besides some other possessions of less importance, were likewise wrested from their power.

To effect the subversion of the republican government in France, it was proposed to excite, by a bold and simultaneous effort, the royalist party, who lay concealed in different parts of the country, but chiefly in the ancient provinces of Britany and Poitou, now termed La Vendée and La Loire. Notwithstanding the severe decrees of the Convention, immense numbers of emigrants had secretly repaired thither in the winter of 1792, and the vicinity of these departments to the sea, afforded every facility for receiving supplies of men and military stores, as well as for the co-operation of the naval powers. The first disturbances in these departments were considered, by the Convention, as a mere momentary effervescence, from the dislike of the populace to the new mode which had been adopted for filling the ranks of the army; but before the end of March the insurgents had assumed a formidable appearance, as to numbers, and their proceedings appeared to be the result of previous arrangement. They professed to act by the authority of Monsieur, the brother of the King, who had assumed the title of Regent. On the 23d of March, the Convention was informed, that the insurgents had made themselves masters of the districts of Cholet, Montaigne, and Clisson, and had defeated General Marce, who had been sent to quell them. The city of Nantes was besieged by them, and the number of royalists encamped before that city was estimated at not less than 40,000. In the beginning of April, General Berruyere was appointed to command against the insurgents; but notwithstanding all the exertions which the French revolutionary go-



vernment could make, they had possessed themselves, before the end of April, of more than fifty leagues of the country, had defeated the republicans in two engagements, and taken a great number of prisoners, with an immense quantity of artillery and military stores.

After the melancholy death of Louis, it may well be supposed that the King of Spain could not be very favourably disposed towards the French nation, and it is not improbable that he meditated hostilities; the Convention, however, with that precipitancy which characterized all their measures, determined to anticipate his declaration, and, on the 7th March, passed a decree of war against his Most Catholic Majesty, one cause of which was stated to be the zeal of that court in behalf of Louis. Ever since the deposition of that ill-fated monarch, two powerful parties, the Gironde, and the Mountain, had divided the Convention. Brissot, Petion, Vergniaux, and their associates, almost all distinguished by their talents, formed the party of the Gironde. Republicans in principle, they had contributed to weaken the constitutional throne, but they had taken no active part in its overthrow. The revolutionists of the 10th of August, Danton, Robespierre, Chabot, Barbaroux, Fabre d'Eglantine, Couthon, and Collot d'Herbois, assumed the name of the Mountain, and aspired to reap the fruits of their treason, and to govern the republic which they had founded on the ruins of the throne. In the month of March, that infamous court, the revolutionary tribunal, was established, to take cognizance of all offences against the safety of the state, and to be fixed to Paris: the judges were to be chosen by the Convention, and the jury from the commune of Paris: its sentences against persons absent were to have the same effect

as if they were present, and from its decision there was no appeal. On the 7th of April, a committee of Public Safety was instituted by the Convention, invested with almost unlimited power, a power which was soon abused to the worst of purposes, and laid the foundation of a tyranny the most sanguinary and atrocious the world had ever witnessed. The defection of Dumouriez contributed in no small degree to the overthrow of the Gironde party, and the destruction of the members of the Bourbon family remaining in the power of the republicans. On the 7th of April, it was decreed, by the Convention, that all the members of that family should be detained as hostages for the safety of the arrested deputies, and that such of them as were not already in the temple should be removed to Marseilles: the *ci-devant* Duke of Orleans, though a member of the Convention, was included in this decree. A considerable part of the month of April was spent in discussing and digesting the declaration of rights, which was to serve as a preface to the new constitution. On the 10th of May, the Convention took possession of their new hall in the Thuilleries, and on that day decreed the first article of the new constitution; *viz.* “the French republic is one and indivisible.” In the mean time, the divisions which had so long subsisted between these two parties approached rapidly to open and avowed hostility. The Mountain party had secured the attachment of the populace of Paris, and the Jacobin club, of which Marat was president, had become devoted to this faction. Even the virtues of the Girondists tended to accelerate their ruin; their humane attempt to save the life of the devoted Louis being urged against them as an unpardonable crime, and as manifesting a culpable indifference to the cause of freedom. On

the 15th of April, a petition was presented to the communes of the forty-eight sections of Paris, at the bar of the Convention, demanding, that twenty-two of the deputies of the Gironde party should be impeached. This party, however, continued to have a preponderance in the Convention, and Marat, a furious leader of the Mountain party, having put his signature to a paper of the most sanguinary tendency, was accused by the Convention, and committed to the abbey prison, but such was his influence over the people, whose passions were continually excited by his inflammatory publications, that in a few days he was acquitted by a jury, and returned to the hall of the Convention in triumph. At length, on the morning of the 31st of May, the commotion every where visible, throughout the capital, denoted an approaching crisis; Henriot, the commander of the national guard, a man entirely devoted to Robespierre, instead of taking the proper measures for the protection of the Convention, was a party in the plot against it, and many of the representatives were alarmed for their own safety. After the tumult had continued a considerable time, a deputation from the revolutionary committees appeared at the bar, and demanded the immediate suppression of the commission of twelve, which had been nominated on purpose to restrain anarchy; a revolutionary army of sans-culottes; a decree of accusation against twenty-two Gironde deputies; and a diminution in the price of bread. They also insisted that certain deputies should be dispatched to the south, to put a stop to the counter-revolution that prevailed there; and they at the same time suggested the arrest of Claviere, the minister of public contributions, and Le Brun, the minister for foreign affairs, but the Convention still



refused to sacrifice the victims demanded by the conspirators. This, however, was the last effort; for, two days afterwards, the legislature, finding itself besieged and imprisoned in its own hall, was at length intimidated into compliance, and not only decreed the arrest of all the obnoxious deputies, thirty-six in number, but proscribed those who endeavoured to avoid death by flight. The vanquished party had wished for a republican form of government, founded on the immutable basis of virtue: the triumphant faction, on the contrary, conceding to popular opinions, still maintained all the forms of a commonwealth, but, under the veil of liberty, introduced the most terrible despotism; and although they immediately drew up a new and seductive constitution, they contrived to suspend all its benefits until the return of peace.

Several of the departments in the mean time took the alarm, and determined to avenge the outrages committed against their deputies. The city of Caen resolved not to acknowledge the Convention, or receive any of its decrees, until the imprisoned members were restored to their functions. The departments of Calvados, the Rhone, and the Loire, also avowed their determination to disown the Convention; and the first of these actually imprisoned three of the Jacobin deputies, who had been sent thither with a view of propagating their tenets, and supporting their cause. At this critical moment, too, a complete counter-revolution took place at Lyons; Marseilles was threatened with commotions; Toulon exhibited manifest symptoms of disaffection; and the cause of the Mountain for a moment appeared desperate. Several of the proscribed deputies, having escaped from their confinement, now sought an

asylum at Nantes, Rennes, Bourdeaux, Caen, and Evreux. Others, abandoning an assembly in which cruelty and injustice preponderated, fled from Paris and joined them, and a general insurrection of the provinces against the capital was immediately agreed upon. Many of the cities nominated commissioners for the purpose of concerting with the deputies from the districts, relative to the measures which the present critical state of affairs seemed to render necessary. Succours of men and of money were promised by all; and the archives of the capital of the Gironde, in which the most zealous of their partisans resided, are said to have contained decrees of adhesion and support on the part of no fewer than seventy-two departments; but this plan, alike destitute of uniformity and foresight, while it added to, and seemed to countenance, the ferocity of the Jacobins, distracted and nearly proved fatal to the republic. After the passions of the people were permitted to subside, few could be prevailed upon to embark in so desperate a cause, and a civil war soon began to appear odious to all, and peculiarly impolitic at such a critical period.

When the indignant provinces first thought of avenging the common cause, a number of the accused deputies assembled for the purpose of directing their movements: Buzot and Gorsas, who had not been seized, and Barbaroux and Petion, who escaped from arrest, headed, at Caen, the insurrection of the west: Louvet, who had distinguished himself by the energy of his writings and his speeches, flying from Paris, rejoined his friends, and found that eight coalesced departments had already nominated their commissioners; that Wimpffen, the gallant defender of Thionville, had been chosen as their leader, while

De Puisaye was appointed by him to act as Adjutant-General. Conscious that the success of their plan depended chiefly on the celerity of their motions, the Girondists wished the troops to begin their march immediately, and even proposed to advance to the capital, where they knew that their friends were both numerous and formidable, at the head of the Britons and Normans alone; but the general, insisting on the advantages likely to ensue from a delay that would enable him to increase the number of their partisans, contented himself with dispersing proclamations; and on being summoned to give an account of his conduct, by the faction that had assumed the reins of government, he replied, that he would disclose his motives and intentions at the head of 60,000 men.

The proscribed deputies began to suspect that Wimpffen and De Puisaye were not only royalists, but secretly attached to the interests of a neighbouring nation, by means of which they wished to place one of the Bourbons on the throne of their ancestors, and the former of these at last disclosed his mind freely, and proposed a junction with the army of La Vendée. On being pressed to advance directly to Paris, without waiting for the arrival of the departmental forces, Wimpffen at length marched towards Vernon, at the head of a small body of troops. The Jacobins, who had assembled some forces in that town, immediately sallied forth, and received them with a discharge of artillery. On this, the whole of the insurgents betook themselves to flight, except a single battalion of 400 men from Finisterre, which, on seeing itself abandoned, retired in good order to Evreux, where the fugitives at length rallied. After this they were all re-conducted to Caen, which the



general now proposed to fortify, that they might there wait for the quotas of troops promised by the neighbouring departments, but the exiled deputies, disgusted with his conduct, and seeing no prospect of success, refused their assent; the armed citizens, actuated by the same motives, marched towards their respective districts; Wimpffen and De Puisaye concealed themselves; the forlorn representatives betook themselves to flight; some perished by the guillotine; others by fatigue and famine; while the victorious party stained their triumph by a series of cruelty, injustice, and bloodshed.

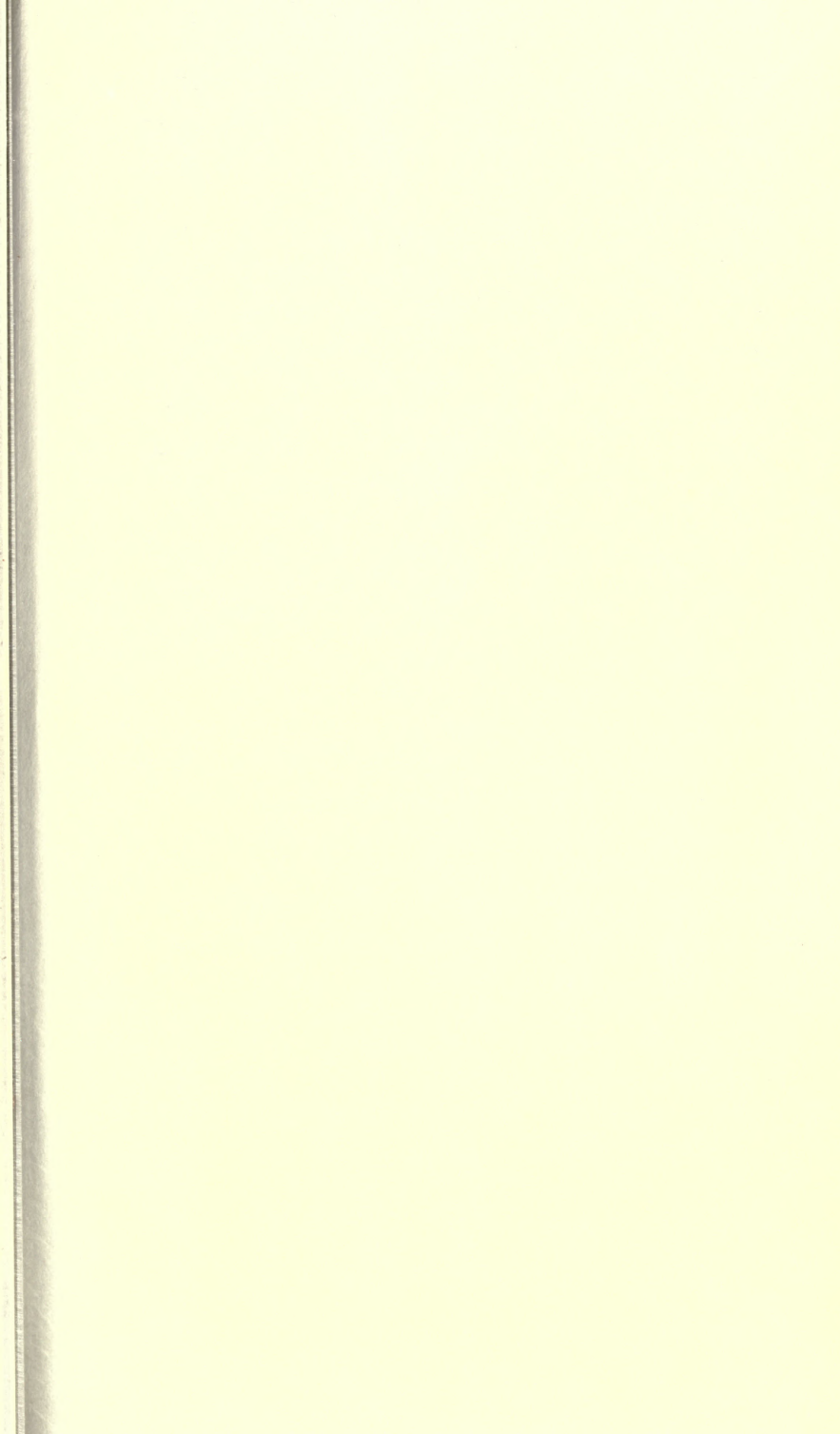
Early in July, an insurrection broke out at Lyons, and a congress of the department was convoked at that city, in which it was resolved to march a considerable force for the reduction of Paris; the Mountain party was declared to be outlawed; and the provisions destined for the armies were intercepted. The cities of Marseilles and Toulon followed the example of Lyons, and entered into that famous confederacy for dissolving the Convention, which has since been distinguished by the name of Federalism. On the 12th, the Marseillois issued a manifesto to the French nation, in which they declared that the situation of Paris was equivalent to the declaration of war against the whole republic; and they urged the people to join their standard, and assist in reducing the faction which had usurped the powers of the republic. On the 8th of July, the committee of Public Safety produced its report concerning the imprisoned deputies of the Convention: it charged Brissot, Petion, and some others, with being the constant favourers of royalty; it alleged that they had conspired to place a new monarch on the throne, some of them in the person of Louis Capet, and others in that of the Duke

of York; Petion was accused of having signed the order, on the 10th of August, to fire on the people from the Thuilleries; and Roland was accused in general terms of persecuting the republicans. On these charges, the Convention declared those who had fled from the decree of arrest, traitors to their country, and they were put out of the protection of the law. These outrageous proceedings, on the part of the Mountain junto, necessarily produced a considerable re-action, which, in one memorable instance, was fatal to one of the most violent of these incendiaries. A female, of the name of Charlotte Cordé, enthusiastically attached to the Gironde party, proceeded from Caen, in Normandy, to devote her life to what she considered as the cause of liberty and her country. Her object was the death of Marat, which, without much difficulty, she effected, though at the expense of her own life. The leaders of the faction, who thought every measure good that could be made subservient to their purpose, found this event too replete with favourable circumstances to be neglected. Marat, whom they had thrown aside to die at leisure, was now restored to more than his ancient honours, was proclaimed a martyr, and his death ordered to be lamented as an irreparable loss to the republic.

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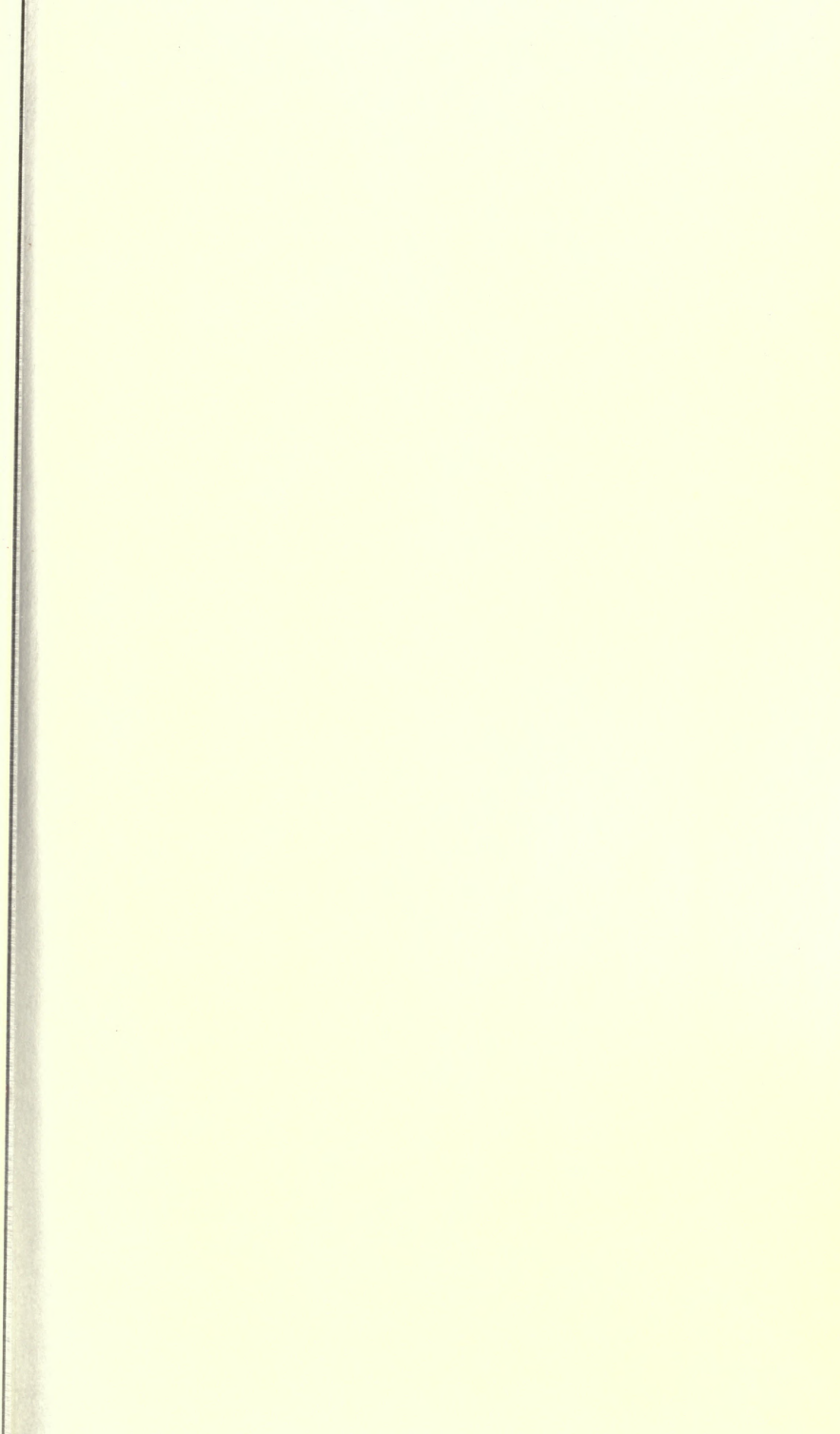
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